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REVIEWS

The History of Holland. By C. M. Davies. Vol. III. Parker.

THE two former volumes of this work, noticed in our 716th and 750th numbers, brought down the history of Holland to the period when the greatness of the Republic provoked the jealousy and cupidity of Louis XIV., and when the English government, which had previously aided the United Provinces in their glorious struggle against despotism, acted the part either of a dangerous enemy or a still more dangerous, because treacherous, ally. It might have been reasonably supposed, that the kindness which the States of Holland had shown to the exiled Stuarts, the extravagant joy with which they hailed the Restoration, and the readiness with which they adopted the suggestions for maintaining the rights of the young Prince of Orange, would have secured them the friendship of Charles II., but that heartless sensualist remembered only the check which the rigid morality of the Dutch had imposed upon his profligacy; and their censure of his vices more than obliterated the remembrance of their zeal for his interests. Other States, from motives scarcely more honourable, were not reluctant to witness the devastation with which Louis menaced the Republic:—

"The neighbouring states, both great and small, and the German princes in especial, were well pleased to behold the approaching humiliation of Holland; the latter, jealous that a country not superior to them in geographical extent, and inferior in natural resources, should become entitled to rank herself with the mighty of the earth; the great sovereigns of Europe, irritated to find the lustre of their ancient dignity, and the grandeur of their empire, eclipsed by the actual wealth and power of a republic of yesterday. The pride, too, of Holland had given them offence—and it was true that she was proud. Proud, not of hosts which her conquering arm had stretched bleeding on the field of battle, nor of the lands and cities she had laid waste with fire and sword, but of her noble fleets, her mighty men-of-war, her merchant-vessels laden with treasure, peopling the ocean she kept at bay: proud of her smiling fields, where the husbandman pursued his labours in content, and enjoyed their fruits in security; of her fair cities, in whose streets crime and poverty were rare, and starvation unknown; of her peaceful dwellings, whose spotless purity seemed an emblem of the moral delicacy which reigned within: proud of her honourable name, synonymous throughout the world with industry and integrity; of her wise and just laws; of her race of hardy sons, who, when she had sent them to gather wealth and glory in all quarters of the globe, returned to her bosom with still abiding affection. Such an honest pride Holland had felt; and of such a pride it was that her rivals aimed to destroy the sources."

There was, however, a fatal defect in the constitution of Holland; the States were virtually an association of oligarchies, wanting the unity of counsel which belongs to a monarchy and the community of purpose that gives strength to democracy. The Republic was consequently divided by the most baneful party-spirit; on the one side, the De Witts bent their old energies to maintain the aristocratic form of government; on the other, the partisans of the House of Orange were eager to revive the dignity of Stadtholder. The Dutch proved how sadly they had fallen from the high moral principle which had borne them triumphant through the war of independence by the double crime which marked the commencement of the contest with France; on the one hand, De Witt, to save the supremacy of his party, offered to compromise the independence of his country; on the other, the Prince of Orange became an accessory to the barbarous murder of the De Witts.

So many writers have shown a determination to exonerate the Prince of Orange from this reproach, that it is only justice to give the conclusive remarks with which Mrs. Davies terminates her account of the murder:—

"At any period after the arrest of Cornelius De Witt, when the populace, fearful of his escape, constantly surrounded his prison, a proclamation from the prince would at once have sufficed to still the tumult; or had he complied with the earnest request of the States in sending some troops and a special guard for the safe-keeping of the bailiff's person, the people would have been satisfied, and the fate of the unhappy prisoner averted. Again, when the States of Holland besought him to lend his aid to discover and punish the authors of this 'detestable crime,' he replied that the number and quality of the guilty rendered all pursuit dangerous; and, shortly after, prevailed with them to grant an amnesty in the most ample terms to both principals and accessories in the murder. Nor was this all; honours and rewards awaited every one of those who had rendered themselves conspicuous in the transactions of that eventful day. But the hand of retribution was heavy on them. They found that when the angry passions of the people had subsided, their association was shunned by all men with contempt and aversion. Verhoef was some time after condemned for his crimes by the tribunal of Rhynland to be publicly whipped, and imprisoned for the remainder of his life; and the manes of the De Witts were avenged, when the unhappy miscreant, writhing under the lash of the executioner, heard the murmurs of the immense multitude around the scaffold applauding the justice of his sentence. Some squandering away their ill-gotten wealth, sank into the grave in loathsome poverty and disease; others, unable to stop in their career of iniquity, terminated their sinful lives immersed in dungeons. Tichelaar himself, during the life of the Prince of Orange, enjoyed a liberal pension 'for the services he had done the state;' of which, being deprived after his death, he was reduced to beggary, and lived to an extreme old age, preserved only by alms from perishing of starvation, and a prey to the bitterest remorse, for having been, as he confessed, the cause of the murder of two innocent men."

The war with France, which ended in the peace of Nimeguen, rendered the Prince of Orange King of Holland in everything but name, and he then entered into that series of intrigues which led to his becoming King of England. From the Revolution to the peace of Utrecht, the histories of England and Holland are identical, but the feelings of alienation produced by that treaty, have never been wholly removed. Mrs. Davies adopts the Dutch view of the English negotiations with France, declaring that Harley and St. John sacrificed both their country and its allies, merely to keep themselves in power. The charge made by English writers, that the Dutch had not borne their fair share of the expenses of the war, is satisfactorily refuted; indeed, the English Parliament showed that its complaints were groundless, by prohibiting the publication of the able memorial which the States issued in reply to the accusation.

The causes for the perceptible decline of Holland towards the middle of the last century, have often engaged the attention of political economists, and are replete with instruction to all commercial nations. They are thus stated by Mrs. Davies:—

"The religious persecutions which the sovereigns of most other countries had carried on, had now, in a great degree, ceased; and those who before despised commerce, fishery, and manufactures, now vied with each other in promoting these sources of wealth; England, especially, had for the last century made a series of commercial regulations, the tendency of every one of which was to draw to themselves the trade formerly monopolized by the United Provinces; while from Spain, France, Portugal, and Italy, wares were now carried directly to the north, and thence back again, instead of being brought as formerly to

the United Provinces, as a general storehouse. They adduced also the heavy duties levied in various ways on importation and exportation; which alone, in fact, rendered the competition of other nations fatal to the commerce of Holland. So long as the port and freightage dues were moderate, the low interest of money, the superior skill and industry, and the frugal habits of the people, would effectually have secured them from all danger arising from the rivalry of less able and experienced enterprisers; but the expense of freightage was now become so high, that merchants no longer found the profits equal to the risks; and in order to avoid it, the countries of the north carried on their trade immediately with those of the south, instead of having recourse, as formerly, to the intervention of the Dutch."

The exorbitant excise and custom duties had an effect, to which reference is elsewhere made, more injurious than that described in the preceding extract. They gave rise to smuggling, and other fiscal frauds, which gradually sapped the ancient and proverbial probity of the Dutch merchants; the character and credit, which had commanded more respect than capital, gradually disappeared, and traders sought markets where they could purchase without dread of adulteration. When the author of '*Recherches sur la Commerce*,' declared "it is no longer safe to buy goods by sample in Holland," he recorded a doom of its trade as irrevocable as if earthquakes had destroyed its warehouses, and a great convulsion of nature choked its harbours. But even at this crisis the statesmen of the United Provinces vindicated their claim to be considered as sound practical economists:—

"The provinces of Guelderland, Zealand, and Friesland, having on one occasion demanded either the prohibition or the imposition of a duty on the importation of foreign corn, on the grounds that in consequence of the low price at which they were obliged to sell the corn they produced they should be unable to furnish their contingent towards the general expenses, and that the money which usually found its way into foreign countries in payment of their corn would be saved to the nation, their proposal was treated by the States as nothing less than an absurdity. The petitioners must, it was said, be in a state of the profoundest ignorance of the first principles of the government of a civilized nation; an occasional prohibition to export corn during periods of famine was indeed permissible; but in no case ought its importation to be checked; that neither in ancient nor modern history could an example of a similar unreasonable prohibition be found; but, on the contrary, the care of all wise rulers has ever been to secure an abundance of food to the people; and that to comply with the desire of the petitioners would be to establish a mischievous monopoly dishonourable to a civilized state."

The colonial policy of Holland was the greatest blot on its administration; monopolies were established everywhere, the rights of the natives were disregarded, and nowhere were slaves so cruelly treated, as in the Dutch settlements. Hence arose repeated insurrections and alarms, punished with remorseless severity; and hence sprung ferocious massacres, perpetrated on vague and unfounded suspicion:—

"The most tragical occurrence of this kind was that which happened in 1740, at Batavia, the seat of the Dutch empire in the East; where the discontent that had betrayed itself amongst the inhabitants, principally Chinese, against the government, gave rise to apprehensions that an insurrection was contemplated. Accordingly, all vagabonds and suspicious persons were expelled the city; but a considerable number remained in the outskirts, concerning whom information was given that they designed to surprise the town, and having massacred the Christians, to take possession of their property. This intelligence was taken as confirmation of the suspicions before entertained by the government of their secret understanding with those within the walls; and the Chinese in the town were commanded to put out their lights at sunset, and not to look out of window, much less appear in the streets. After the lapse of some time

spent in mutual mistrust, the fugitives advanced in a somewhat hostile manner to within reach of the artillery of the town, whence they were soon driven by the firing of a few rounds. But their appearance had a fatal effect on the destiny of their unhappy countrymen within. On the ground that they would not have ventured on such a demonstration without some encouragement from the latter, the soldiers and armed burghers, by the command, as they said, of the governor, Adrian Valkenier, broke into the houses of the defenceless Chinese, murdered the inhabitants, and pillaged all they could lay their hands on. Amid these horrors, fires, kindled, it was affirmed, by the sufferers in their desperation, broke out in various places; and had they not been promptly extinguished, the town in a few hours would have presented nothing but a mass of ruins. As it was, the spectacle of the half-burnt houses, bestrewn with the dead and dying, heaped together as they had offered themselves unresistingly to slaughter, or singly as they had fought the last agonizing struggle for life, was sufficiently appalling. The pillage continued two or three days before the hand of authority was interposed to arrest it. The Chinese in the suburbs were all either massacred or forced to take flight. By degrees order was restored, and those who had fled or concealed themselves were allowed to return and resume their avocations on condition of their submission to the government; and, extraordinary as it may appear, numbers were ready to avail themselves of the permission. The governor, Valkenier, was afterwards imprisoned."

In the American war Holland appeared as the enemy of England. Proof is offered in this volume, that the court of England forced the Dutch into hostilities, by a series of wanton provocations, equally inconsistent with good faith and sound policy. It is insinuated that this stain on our national honour resulted from the personal dislike of George III. to the States-General, and his hope that war would so strengthen the party of the Prince of Orange as to enable him to become King, instead of Stadtholder. There can be no reason for hiding, in the present day, the fact that from the time when the States of Holland had acceded to the Armed Neutrality, proposed by Catherine of Russia, the English cabinet had resolved on their overthrow, and that the Prince of Orange secretly adopted the same course of policy. His conduct at the beginning of the war justified the suspicion with which he was viewed by the patriot party:—

"A visit of the stadtholder to the Texel inspired men with the hope that some more vigorous measures would be pursued; and, in particular, that orders would be given to the fleet to intercept a convoy of English vessels which was about to transport some regiments of Germans to America. This hope, however, was disappointed: the fleet sailed out of port, indeed, but returned almost immediately; and at the same time a rumour was spread that one hundred British merchantmen were gone to the Baltic without any convoy at all, as if conscious of their security from molestation. The mistrust which these circumstances excited, was inflamed to still more painful suspicions when it appeared that the English newspapers had mentioned the expected return of the Dutch fleet, and that the government of that country was far better informed of the state of the naval force, and of all the concerns of the United Provinces, than the inhabitants themselves; it being, indeed, by no means uncommon to receive intelligence of many occurrences that had happened there first from England."

At the general peace, England extorted from Holland compensation for the sacrifice she was compelled to make to other powers. This degradation completed the alienation of the people from the Stadtholder, and prepared them for fraternizing with the French, during the wars of the Revolution. Even the alliance of England, when the French prepared to invade Holland, proved scarcely less injurious than its enmity could have been:—

"Though England did not want for zeal and activity in her behalf, the troops she furnished, ill-organized, and wretchedly commanded, appeared to serve

no other purpose than to abandon, one by one, every position they had taken up; and, totally destitute of discipline, were an object of terror to the inhabitants and contempt to their enemies. 'Their conduct on their retreat from Nimeguen,' says a writer strongly favourable to that nation and the Orange party, 'was marked by the most lawless pillage, the most odious licentiousness, and detestable cruelties; so that the inhabitants of the places they passed through would far rather trust to the mercy of the invading enemy than to such allies and defenders.' The prohibitions issued by the Duke of York were found wholly inefficient to restrain these excesses; and even the Pensionary, Van de Spiegel himself, began to doubt whether it were not preferable to make a separate peace with France upon such conditions as they could obtain, than await an issue dependent upon the assistance of such coadjutors."

The history terminates with the incorporation of Holland with France; the revolution of 1813, and the establishment of a limited monarchy, under the House of Orange, being related only in a brief summary. Complaint is made of a refusal to permit an examination of the correspondence of Sir Joseph Yorke, ambassador from England to the Hague between 1750 and 1780, which is preserved in the State-Paper Office, but most of the facts which those letters contain are now sufficiently notorious. We cannot close this volume without bearing testimony to the patient research and integrity of the writer: few histories bear so strongly the impress of a determination to find out the truth, and to tell it; and this is the more laudable as the events throughout a large portion of the time to which this volume refers are far from being creditable to the English government or the English people.

King Alfred, a Poem. By J. Fitchett, edited by R. Roscoe. 6 vols. Pickering.

ONE of the wonders of the world is the 'Mahābhārata,' the great Hindu epic, which contains 100,000 slokas, or distichs. Visions of the poetic "wealth of Ormus or of Ind," seem to have been from an early period floating before the imagination of Mr. Fitchett, when he projected a romantic *epopea*; and 'King Alfred' might have even exceeded the length of the Indian marvel, had its author lived to complete it, and not left it to his competent editor to compress the materials of an abundant argument into a single book, for the mere purpose of winding up the fable in the readiest manner. As it is, the number of lines in the poem is no less than 131,538! the number of books being forty-eight! The sum of single verses in 'King Alfred' therefore exceeds considerably that of the distichs in the celebrated Hindu 'Mahābhārata.' The addition of only 68,462 lines to the later production would have made them equal. Let us, nevertheless, content ourselves with the fact that Mr. Fitchett's 'King Alfred,' is about twelve times the length of Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' and five times, at least, that of Homer's 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey' put together. Of this distinction, it is not possible for anything earthly to deprive it. The late Dr. Drake seems to have been a friend of the author, and to have counselled a less ambitious effort in this respect; but the editor justifies him on the score of his materials and his design. After all, it might have been worse—like some recent candidates for epic glory, the author might have had his art not only as a poet but as a versifier to learn. A few passages, however, soon convinced us that the writer of 'King Alfred' was at least no fool, and that we were not entitled to dismiss his work, long as it was, without perusal. It is our hope, therefore, to render justice to its merits;—from its pretensions, however, it must be tried by a high standard.

The poem opens just after the death of Siward, an English earl, who had been killed in the

battle of Wareham, when the Danes stormed the English camp, and in which Alfred himself was wounded. The poetical incidents of the first book consist in the Queen Elsweda visiting Alfred in his tent, for the purpose of stanching her royal husband's wounds, and in the King's attending the burial of Siward, and singing his funeral song. The Danes are advancing to Exeter, and Alfred, being without a sufficient force to meet them, dispatches his chiefs to their several counties to raise recruits. We are then introduced to the Danish chieftains, Guthrum, Oskital, and Amund, and to the superstitious rites by which the invading army is enflamed for the conflict. Among them is one Kenwulph, who, stung with remorse for having deserted Alfred, secretly hates the Danes.

So far, so good—perhaps. But an ordinary epic must of course have its machinery—and an extraordinary epic must have all that belongs to the ordinary, and something more. Machinery, then, of some sort there must be. Satan and his legions accordingly have their part to perform in the poem; as have also Michael and his angelic powers. Dissatisfied with the amount of excitement produced in the Danish troops by the bardic songs, Satan proposes to add to it by commissioning certain demons to assume the shape and attributes of Odin and other pagan deities, and thus appear to the Danish army to excite them to battle and devastation. Michael, consequently, finds himself in the precise condition of his *protégé* king Alfred—his powers are too few, and he "departs to heaven to fetch a new band of angels." Surely, there is here a poverty of invention at the very outset of this long poem, which should have made its author cautious. Repetition is not accumulation; and the absurdity of the expedient might well have excused us from reading any further. But justice is patient; here is a large work, if not a great one; the labour of a life; we will therefore be patient, in order to be just. Moreover, the third book, which contains these absurd supernatural contrivances, boasts a power of versification and a wealth of poetic diction, which makes us regret that the theme had not been worthier of the treatment. There are, however, more reminiscences of Milton's chaos than were advisable or necessary. Before the Tartarian invaders of Eden had "bridged" the way from hell to earth, this difficult passage was open to metrical description, but in the time of the Danish invaders of England, the infernals must have so multiplied the accommodations of transit, as to pass to and fro with unimaginable facility. At any rate, it is so now; you never have to seek far to find a fiend; only talk of the devil, and he is sure to appear—ay, on the instant. The heavenly scenes are also subject to the like charge of hazardous imitation; and it would have been well if Mr. Fitchett's notion of the *epopea* had not involved the necessity of supernatural machinery.

At length, our feet are again planted on the green sward of England. The invading and invaded are now within gunshot of each other—anon, single combats and general battles ensue; finally, the English are victorious. Then come truces to bury the slain on both sides. The fiends are also diligent in providing attractive illusions for the Danes; showing to Guthrum a vision of the Gothic heaven, and presenting him with celestial armour. It is mock-celestial, however, for in a second battle Guthrum, when fighting in single combat with Alfred, loses an important part of it—the sword. Victory, accordingly, for England!—the Danes are driven into Exeter! But the demons are again at work. Having saved Guthrum, by the old expedient of carrying him away in a cloud, they determine to escort the fleet, lying at Wareham, to the assistance of the Danes; but Alfred, op-

opportune hearing of its sailing, hastens on board the English fleet to oppose them. Of course, a sea-fight follows; the English being victorious, in pledge of the future naval prosperity of England. The Danes are consoled for their loss by visions and dreams; Guthrun, in particular, is so cheered; and descending with Odin into Nifheim, the Gothic hell, receives there another sword from Hela, the Queen of Death. The elaborate details into which the poet here enters extend his book to 4,000 (all but 26) lines, which is nearly four times as long as the longest book in Milton's 'Paradise Lost.'

But we must proceed with our analysis. Having forced the Danes to fire and retreat from the city of Exeter, Alfred proposes peace; but the Danes, being reinforced by a large army just disembarked, reject the offer, and subsequently succeed in dispersing the English army. Alfred flies, and, in the disguise of a harper, visits the Danes, after which he finds refuge in a neatherd's cottage, and occupies himself in rural labours. In this part of the poem we meet for the first time with the natural and pathetic; and are induced to respect the author's powers, and to regret that he did not confine his ambition and his poem within reasonable compass.

Take a specimen of his skill in rural description:—

They cross the dewy pasture, and approach
The mansion. Swallows underneath the roof
Twittering in throngs bespoke the air was sweet.
Then opening by a latch the wicket gate,
The rural cell they enter. First in sight
The peasant's wife appears, her cleanly pails
Preparing to receive their milky charge.
Denulph to her presents his modest guest
As a new servant, whom in former days
He knew and prized, and meeting, was engaged,
For food and home, their rural works to aid.
The obeisant Alfred, to the busy dame,
Volatile in her talk, of question full,
Tells he is strong and healthy, and will tend
To his best power Denulph's and her commands.
Prompt she receives him at her husband's will;
Then shows him proud the neatness of her home,
With all its order'd comforts: her small room,
Whose hearth was gay with flowers and myrtle sprigs,
Red berries of the rose, and mountain ash;
Then her cool dairy, through whose walls a stream
Flow'd freshly murmuring, with its neat stone press
Beside the latticed window: next her sweet
And shining pails, her tables polish'd bright:
Her stores of fruit and cream: her treasured shelves,
Where bowls were ranged along and glistening wares,
All these the stranger to her wish admires.
Over the low fire a wild stag's horns were hung,
And by the verge of the brick-hearth there lay
A kitten, purring in its quiet sleep.
Around the stranger, with an upward look,
A dog play'd fondling, which with notice kind
The sovereign stroked, and with soft voice caress'd.
The dame then bids the stranger find employ.
Instant he offers to the kine to bear
Her pails, which she, with his attention pleased,
Permits: and follows (noddling as she goes,
As proud of her new prize) the seeming clown.

An interesting and mysterious maiden is here poetically described, to whom Alfred (in the third person) relates his former life, and the origin of the Danish invasion, and who, in return, relates her own history, confessing that she is the daughter of the traitor Kenwulph. At length, Alfred succeeds in exciting the peasantry to assault the Danish garrison of Ordmer's castle; travels about the realm in various disguises; at times concealing himself in the island of Athelney, where he discovers his sister, the Queen of Mercia, whose adventures are told at length. In this island-retreat prophetic visions comfort the monarch, while his enemies are in search of him, and not finding him, burn the neatherd Denulph's cottage, and carry away his family captive to Windsor. Soon afterwards the King is visited by friends, and instructed in the state of his kingdom; joins in field sports; indulges in both jocular and serious conversations with the learned Erigen, and entertains his guests with royal liberality. These conversations extending over many books, it must be confessed, are awfully tedious, though in the course of them almost everything is foreshadowed, particularly the founding of univer-

sities, and the state of learning and religion. At length intelligence arrives that Oddune, earl of Devon, has defeated and slain Hubba, one of the Danish kings, while besieging Kinwith Castle, obtaining moreover possession of the Reafen, or magic standard. Hereupon the King journeys to Kinwith, where there is storytelling, and banqueting, and bardic songs, to the extent of two or three books, until, upon report, that the Danes are approaching, the party again retire to the island of Athelney.

From among the island scenery here indicated we select the following:—

So said, the inmates of the lowly cell,
(All save the gentle Queen, on household thoughts
Busied), its covert leave, and venture forth
Within the precincts of the wooded isle.
For a companion, too, the sportive King
Opens now the wicket of an osier-pale,
Construct hard by, whose narrow fence contains
A little fawn, which his own hands had caught
And from the net had spared unhurt. This late,
For pleased amusement of an idler hour,
Himself had loved to feed, and fondling tamed,
Until it knew its master and its friend,
And joy'd to follow off his vagrant steps,
Amusing by its presence, with scarce less
Of shown affection than the faithful dog,
Such as in earlier youth the King well knew
To rear and train, meet for the sylvan chase,
The sport of nobles, which alike he loved,
Their education's chiefest exercise.
With ready joy, the playful fawn pursued
Their devious feet, not seeking then to leave
The friend it knew, but often in their path
Seizing his mantle's skirt, or down-bent hand,
With upward gaze, as asking food or play,
Some word, or sign of wonted acknowledgment:
A pleasing spectacle, that to the heart
Bespoke the man, by kindness thus endear'd
Even to the brute creation, claiming so
Indulgence to its harmless innocence.—
Ah! exercised ere now on tenderer ties,
Since lost, and absent here: in vain supplied
By the pet lamb, or gambols of the fawn,
Yet by their sport to memory recall'd.

In the same isle, also, are reintroduced the supernatural machinery; the evil spirits not only enacting new deceptions connected with the Runic mythology, but providing a new magic standard. Several books are occupied with this; till, at the end of the 25th, and throughout the 26th, we find certain sorceresses calling up "the witch Angerbode, mother of the three goblins, the wolf Fenris, the serpent Midgard, and Hela, Queen of Death, with her train of hags and monsters," to make discovery of the King's retreat. Not much is gained by these visions, as Hianfrid has, after all, to use his own natural wits in inquiring from county to county, in the course of which search he falls in with the deserted Queen at Woodstock.

Then, again, for seven books more, we have islet scenery and incidents, conversations and stories without end, love passages and intrigues of all kinds; interrupting the action for no less a space than TWENTY-ONE THOUSAND lines! Then comes a night skirmish between Alfred and Hianfrid, after which the latter returns to the Queen, and takes her to the camp of the Danes. This brings us to the 36th book. Twelve more remain; an amount of reading three times that of the whole 'Paradise Lost,'—without, alas! being three times better.

Yet in the 37th book, the poet attempts the highest possible flight; for he makes Alfred, in the character of a minstrel, sing to the Danes, the Christian doctrine of the last judgment, the Danish bards having previously celebrated Ragnarok, or Twilight of the Gods, thus giving the Gothic version of the same great event. Guthrun, pleased with Alfred's song, introduces him to a Christian captive; and in this way is the wandering monarch introduced suddenly to his long lost Queen. By this and other incidents, the chances of Alfred's detection are increased, in aid of which infernal synods, mystic conjurations, and the weird sisters are all put in requisition. At length, the royal pair have an interview, which necessitates his flight. The fugitive monarch is traced to the

isle of Athelney; machinations and plots between Hianfrid and Kenwulph in consequence; defeated, however, by Alfred's knowledge, as gathered in the Danish camp, of the enemy's plans; Windsor Castle surprised, the royal captives set at liberty; meetings and recognitions of all kinds; triumphs in the isle; Hianfrid's suicide; assembly of Danes; new visions, new magic standard; angelic interferences; martial levies; descriptions of towns and districts; religious rites; banquets; marches and countermarches; and the great battle of Edington; final defeat and rout of the Danes; restoration of his Queen to Alfred; and formal submission of his foes; make the busy and prolonged argument of the eleven concluding books.

Mr. Fitchett, a country lawyer, we understand, died in 1838, and occupied the leisure time of forty years in composing and obtaining information for this prodigious work. During that long period, probably, there was an interval when such a production would have gained more sympathy than it can hope for at present. Patriotic and religious as it is, the public will not go back to the Danish invasion for a subject; or if they do, it must be treated in a more familiar manner than here meets us. The human interest should have been more attended to; the antiquarian less.

Thus we have rendered to our readers an idea the best we were able, of a work which, however extraordinary, it is exceedingly improbable that any one of them will read for himself. Yet, personally, he will feel a respect for the man who, with unwearied application, had pursued the accomplishment of an early aspiration in a labour of such magnitude. These are not the days in which men are to be discouraged from the projection of great things—rather it needs that they should be turned from the pursuit of immediate profit to the patriotic achievement of enduring renown in the most difficult undertakings, lest from a race of intellectual giants, we sink into a generation of dwarfs. Trivial objects achieved with ease, will soon make us weak ourselves, and subject our descendants to be scorned as "children of the feeble." The cause of Mr. Fitchett's failure probably lay in this, that, notwithstanding the greatness of his design, he did not give himself so heart and soul to it, as to sacrifice everything else in the world for it. We can scarcely conceive the possibility of such a purpose being adequately executed, save as the *business* of a life. As the amusement of leisure hours, the work is creditable enough. But in proportion as the poem is longer, should it be better than the epics of Homer, Virgil, and Milton. It is manifestly inferior, however, to Glover's 'Leonidas and Athenaid,' having less of action and interest than either; Mr. Fitchett's extreme desire to exhibit a perfect acquaintance with Scandinavian mythology, Christian theology, British archæology, and such like antiquarian points, has led him into so many digressions, descriptive of troops and ships, places and towns, manners and customs, arms and architecture, and what not, that it is utterly impossible for even a strong intellect, to connect the different links of the meagre action of the poem together. Invention and imagination are equally sacrificed to memory or research, while the uniform exhibition of passion is necessarily precluded. Another evil also has arisen from the author's devotion to so long a work; that it shut him out from the influences of contemporary literature. Hence, though we detect a few imitations of Sir W. Scott and others, yet, on the whole, the weight of the style is of a former age rather than the present, and wants much elegance and grace which a reference to modern compositions

would have suggested. With all its faults, however, the mere attempt is honourable, and the execution far better than, under the circumstances, could have been expected.

Memoirs of a Babylonian Princess (Maria Theresa Asmar). Written by Herself, and Translated into English. 2 vols. Colburn.

THE most sceptical reader must be convinced, apart from the warrant of travellers and orientals, of the substantial truth of the 'Arabian Nights,' crowded though they be with magicians, fairies, dwarfs, fountains that talk, and fish that "do their duty." There is an obvious reality in all their pictures of life and manners, in spite of flowers of rhetoric and figures of speech. Now we are not similarly impressed by the Memoirs of this new 'Princess of Babylon;' the agency of fancy being manifest, and withal intrusive, in a species of composition where it should have no place. Many a capital tale is spoilt in the telling; the daughter of Emir Abdallah Asmar had more to say than the knife-grinder of anti-Jacobin celebrity; yet her book, though as high-flown, is hardly so amusing as the ballad. Let us try, however, what can be woven from its pages, by way of a Midsummer Easter-piece!

Our Princess was one of eighteen children, born in the year 1804, in a tent near a Palace of Delight, among the ruins of Nineveh. To this her mother had retired on the loss of a brother, who had died from the bite of a serpent. Her family, originally of Brahminical extraction, had for generations been Christian, belonging to the church planted at Travancore by Saint Thomas; and, our authoress tells us, that her father's wealth in flocks and herds, purple and fine linen, was largely expended in works of beneficence and the maintenance of the Christian faith. From childhood upwards, Maria Theresa seems to have shown a touch of Bettina's tricky and adventurous disposition. The first circumstance she records of herself was the climbing a date-tree in the Emir's garden at Bagdad, where, hidden among its leaves, she mocked the tone of the Mollah in the neighbouring minaret. Her next was a theft of lemons, not unaccompanied by sharp after-visitations of compunction; this feat, she assures us, was her last acted lie; and since that time she has been pilfered and traded upon everlastingly, owing "to the confiding nature of her disposition."

The Princess next tells—somewhat incoherently after the above—that, as a child, she preferred the society of elder persons to those of her own age. Her grandmother was a treasury of legends, and particularly fond of narrating the siege of Mosul by Nadir Shah in 1743. From this ancient lady the Princess inherited some splendid jewels, of which, however, she was subsequently "robbed in a public conveyance." At the age of eleven she bore her father company in an excursion to Persia; one of his objects being the reparation of his shattered fortunes by reopening an emerald mine, which had been closed by some former Shah in a fit of passion. The Emir's design, however, was not executed. Neither was it fated that he should accomplish the marriage of his daughter to the young Sheikh, to whom, following the custom, Maria Theresa had been betrothed on her birth. The young lady had no turn for the bridal state. She commenced her study of the Fathers at the early age of six years, and had set her mind on sharing the sufferings and the glory of saints, hermits, and martyrs, and on devoting herself to a religious life; whereby she earned herself the name of "Bechmel Biri," the Daughter of the Desert. Resolving to become a nun, she persuaded her Sheikh to follow her example; and he accordingly took Trappist vows, and lives in a hermitage at

the foot of the cedar mountain of Lebanon—even unto this day. The Princess gives a picture of her own early life; she made what the Germans would call a "thee-and-thou" friendship with a young girl whose name was Mariam:—

"Both of us were enthusiastic for the cause of religion. I scarcely know on which side the greater zeal lay. Her personal charms were of a high order, and of that description which, at first sight, strikes the beholder of the other sex with admiration. But she heeded not their attentions, and had no desire to make conquests; her whole soul being absorbed in religious meditation, and nearly her whole time passed in pious observances. At midnight we frequently rose and passed hours together in acts of devotion. During Lent our food consisted of vegetables, boiled with rice; of which we partook sparingly once a day. On Sundays we frequently walked into the fields, and, collecting around us a number of our own sex, we instructed them in the principles of our faith. Hundreds were sometimes attracted to the spot, where, seated on the grass, they would attentively listen to our discourses. Like myself, Mariam had come to the determination to lead a life of celibacy, and to dedicate herself to the advancement of the true faith. This determination on our part caused us to be regarded with wonder, by all who knew us and were acquainted with our vows; for I was the first woman who, since the Mussulman dominion, had devoted herself solemnly to a life of celibacy in my neighbourhood, and my friend was the second."

Not long, however, were Mariam and Maria permitted to carry on their pastoral labours undisturbed. On the death of the tolerant Pasha, by whom they were permitted, the Christian church, at Mosul, was subjected to cruel persecution. Our heroine's father and relations refused to turn renegades, and were imprisoned and bastinadoed in her hearing: one of her uncles was branded in the forehead with hot irons; one died under the torture: and the prisoners were only released upon payment of a heavy fine. As for the Princess, she was only too happy, after such terrific and agitating scenes, to enter a convent in the town of Alkoush: where, for a while, she led the solitary and devotional life of an anchoress. Six months later, on the breaking up of her family, she removed to a similar cell among the ruins of Nineveh, and there commenced a grand plan "of founding an establishment for learned women," with the assistance of a friend from Mesopotamia, and another from Persia. They taught Kurdish, Chaldee, Turkish, and Persian: and the fame of their school presently attracted large numbers. The Princess, too, constantly preached in the open air: making converts the by. In particular, she appears to have aimed her eloquence at the wife of a Pasha. The latter, however, remained obdurate: returning three hours' tough discourse on disputed matters of belief, by merely a commonplace invitation to a dinner party, on the break up of the Ramazan. This, for the good of the church, our Princess reluctantly accepted: we will allow her to continue in her own words, having warned the reader that it was not without a struggle that her eremite's weeds were laid by for the gorgeous costume we shall now exhibit:—

"I was superbly dressed. My *ghombaz*, or dress, was of white gold tissue, open in front, after the manner of the east, with ample sleeves of the same material descending to the knees, and confined at the waist by a girdle richly embroidered in gold. My *sherwals*, or trousers, were of crimson silk. Around my ankles were fastened anklets of silver gilt, richly chased, and bouchaches, or slippers, covered with gold embroidery, were on my feet. These, with a turban of white muslin embroidered with gold, and a Persian shawl thrown round my waist, completed the costume in which I went to pay my first visit to the Amira. * * On arriving at the door of the house, I was met by an old eunuch, who came to conduct me into the presence of the Princess.

After passing through three or four doors, fastened with padlocks, of which he carried the keys, he led me into a spacious court, paved with marble brought from Diarbekir, which was polished to such a degree as to present the appearance, when viewed obliquely, of a huge horizontal mirror. It required, in fact, no small degree of dexterity to get safely across this court; for it was like walking upon ice. As I entered I observed three negresses, who had just been engaged in cleaning this polished pavement, and were gathering up their apparatus ready to depart. In the midst was a superb marble fountain, with numerous jets d'eau, disposed with considerable taste, and on the left the *Iwân*, a chamber open the entire length of one of its sides to the court, from which it was only separated by a step. The walls of the *Iwân* were decorated with a variety of ornamental arabesque devices, executed in different colours, mostly of a dazzling and marked kind. A splendid Persian carpet covered the floor; while the 'takht,' or large centre cushion, was covered with brilliant scarlet velvet, handsomely embroidered. Through a door on the left of this chamber I was conducted into an immense saloon, which far surpassed, in the splendour of its decorations, the apartment I had just quitted. The carpet was of still more exquisite Persian manufacture, and the musnud was covered with red and green velvet, and embroidered in the most costly manner, the result of many a month's toil. I had not had time to examine half the beauties of this saloon when the Pasha's sister made her appearance. Nothing could exceed the courtesy with which she received me. After the first formalities were over, she insisted on placing me by her side on the musnud, and absolutely overwhelmed me with compliments and civilities. At this moment three Jairiahs, all beautiful young girls, principally from Georgia, Circassia, and Kurdistan, with skins of dazzling whiteness, radiant as the full moon, contrasting with, and giving unrivalled intensity to large black eyes, black as night, and luxuriant raven locks, entered the room."

We omit a rhapsody on female beauty which follows: only equalled by a burst, in praise of Charles Lamb's 'Great Plant,' to be found in a subsequent page:—

"The three jairiahs now approached us, and one of them, going upon one knee, presented the 'lakan,' a round tunnel-shaped vessel of silver-gilt, with a cover pierced full of holes, and having around it receptacles for soap, for the purpose of washing. A second slave, also kneeling, held in her hand a silver-gilt vase, or urn, of exquisite workmanship, containing water, which she continued to pour on the 'lakan,' through the holes in the cover of which it fell into the vessel beneath, until we had completed our ablutions. A third held the napkins, the edges of which were embroidered with gold. This ceremony performed, two other jairiahs appeared, each having a 'bakhour,' or censer, with two handles, filled with incense, which shed a delicious perfume throughout the apartment. These were followed by three others, one of whom bore a silver-gilt tray, on which were placed six gold cups of exquisite workmanship, containing three different sorts of sherbet, which were handed to us by a second jairiah; whilst a third held in her hand a napkin embroidered with gold. Then came three others; one bearing a tray of gold, inlaid with diamonds and emeralds, on which were small china cups, called 'fingan,' together with vessels, or holders of gold, embossed and jewelled, called 'aerf,' serving for saucers. These are used to protect the hands from burning; as the coffee, which is made exceedingly strong, and drunk without milk or sugar, is taken so hot, that it would be impossible to hold the vessel actually containing it. The coffee having been removed, two eunuchs entered, bearing in their hands the 'nerghila,' or pipe, most commonly in use among the ladies of Mesopotamia. It is not unlike the hookah in design, except that the vessel containing the rose-water is in the form of a globe, and the tube between the mouth-piece and the reservoir of rose-water is rigid instead of being flexible. The soothing influence of the 'nerghila,' the fragrance of the burning aloë, the gentle murmuring of the rose-water in the reservoir, and the tender strains issuing from a musical box brought from Europe, which poured forth clusters of notes, clear and distinct as the drip-

ping of a fountain in the noon-day shade, combined to lull our senses into a state of happiness, like that produced by a delicious dream. * * During the half hour in which we were enjoying our 'nerghilashs' we conversed but little. Ten jairiahs stood before us, in an attitude of respect, with their arms reverentially folded before them. Our pipes being finished, the Pasha's sister offered to show me her brother's harem; a proposal to which my curiosity gave a ready assent. We proceeded first to visit the bed-rooms, which were very numerous. They were covered, for the most part, with magnificent carpets. The beds, the manufacture of Bagdad, were made of the branches of the palm-tree, and were so light, that the whole frame might, without difficulty, be lifted with one hand. On the bed of the Pasha's chief wife were five mattresses, each covered with silk of a different colour from the others, filled with the feathers of the peacock."

To this succeeds "a screed" from the Prophecies: We must say, the mixture reminds us of Win. Jenkins's compound of the "Turkey-shell com" and the joys of the "new Jerusalem"! But to go on:—

"On the roof were erected three tents, made of a blueish-green oilcloth. Protected by these we enjoyed the magnificent prospect before us, unmolested by the rays of the sun. After remaining here for a short time, we descended into the garden, which covered an immense space of ground, not less, I should say, than three-quarters of a square mile, intersected on every side with rivulets of water, of not more than a foot in width, embanked with marble, and fringed with a profusion of flowers of every description, which filled the surrounding air with fragrance; the predominating odour proceeding from the beds of roses, which flourished in most lavish abundance. After spending an hour in this enchanting place, the princess conducted me to a saloon opening upon the garden, where I was introduced to the wives of her brother, the Pasha, in number twenty-five. In addition to Georgians and Circassians, there were some from Kurdistan. One of them, with whom I conversed, was a beautiful Georgian, with large black eyes, shaded by eye-lashes, long, dark, and drooping like a cedar branch, and not more than eighteen years old."

At length the Pasha himself enters, but soon leaves them for the adjoining mosque, the Mollah, from the neighbouring minaret, having called to mid-day prayer:—

"Forthwith the ladies gave themselves up to their devotions; first going upon their knees, and then prostrating themselves on the ground, and kissing it, crying aloud, 'There is no God but Allah! there is no God but the God of heaven, and Mahomet is his prophet; there is no hope, no refuge, save in the most high and mighty God.' During all this time they had before them what they called a relique of the great Prophet himself, which was no less than a fragment of the very 'sherwals,' or trousers, said to have graced the limbs of Mahomet's sister, enveloped in paper, and encased in a rich gold cover, inlaid with diamonds. This precious relique they repeatedly kissed, and placed on their heads during their prayers. These pious observances lasted about a quarter of an hour, during the whole of which period I remained seated on the 'diwan,' regarding the extraordinary scene with unmingled curiosity. As soon as it was over, a slave entered and announced dinner. The invitation was promptly attended to, and we all proceeded to the dining-room, which, on account of the great heat of the weather (it being then the month of June), was one of the apartments opening the whole width of one of its sides, into the court."

We must leave the party when we have seated them at table, properly accommodated with fans of peacocks' feathers, nerghilashs, and golden goblets of pomegranate juice. After dinner the Pasha's lady showed the Princess her wonderful parrot, as clever as *Fert-vert*, and fifty times as orthodox—and proposed an excursion to the tomb of the prophet Jonas, which our heroine declined. Her plan of proselytism does not seem to have produced further results.

The next chapter—a visit in which the Princess accompanied her mother to the baths of

Ain el Kibrit—yields us some veritable Eastern curiosities:—

"After staying at the baths until my mother's health was perfectly re-established, we set out for Telkef, a town about nine miles distant from Mosul, towards Amadih, of which my uncle was governor. The town is pleasantly situated, as its name, which signifies 'the mountain of delight,' imports, and the soil is good, producing nearly every sort of fruit and vegetable, to be found in that latitude. Carrots a yard in length and six inches in diameter have been grown there, and of so great weight, that a child would be unable to carry one of them. Turnips are also produced, sometimes two feet in diameter, which are eaten both raw and cooked in various ways; and a kind of cucumber, resembling a huge serpent, is also grown here. The latter is most frequently seen in a horse-shoe shape, and is so long that when put round the neck the two ends nearly reach the knees. It is a very common practice with the natives to pickle the turnip in vinegar. * * Telkef is renowned for the enormous height to which the corn growing in the surrounding fields attains. The stalk grows to such a length that a horseman can ride through a field without being seen, the point of his lance alone peering above the waving ears. * * Harvest being over, the produce of the district is gathered in the desert; where it is heaped up into a vast mass, having the appearance of a moderately sized hill, on which are placed men, who keep up a constant supply to the machine used for separating the ear from the straw and husk. As I have never, during my travels, seen an apparatus in any degree resembling the one used in Mesopotamia and Assyria for this purpose, I will attempt briefly to describe it. A wooden cylinder, about four feet long and two feet thick, is fixed horizontally under a platform which rests on a carriage, mounted on wheels. On this cylinder, which revolves like a wheel, at an interval of about one foot, are fixed two rows of sharp blades, somewhat in the shape of hatchet heads. These turn within four inches of the ground. The whole machine is yoked to two or more horses, according to the quantity of corn and the means of the district, and is then drawn round in a circle of vast diameter; the driver standing on the platform, which is raised about three or four feet from the ground. During the whole of the time a constant supply of corn is furnished by the labourers on the heap in the centre, who manage to throw it exactly in the course of the machine, where it is completely crushed by the revolving cylinder, until the whole heap has undergone the operation. On the outside of this huge circle are stationed a number of men, who, with an instrument which, in some degree, answers the purpose of a rake, though it differs widely in appearance from that implement, having the teeth arranged in circles, one above another, not altogether unlike a birch broom, gather the crushed corn; which is then winnowed in the most simple manner, by throwing it into the air, and allowing the chaff to blow away. The ears being separated from the chaff, are again gathered together in a large pile, on which the 'nazar,' who is an officer appointed by the Pasha of the district, for the purpose of securing the share of the produce due to the government, imprints his own name in large characters. This act he performs in several parts of the heap: so that to carry any away before the Pasha has taken his share, which amounts to a tenth part of the whole produce, without detection, becomes impossible. These precautions, together with the dread of five hundred lashes, the penalty affixed to this offence, combine to secure to the government, or at least to its representative, its full share of the produce. The nazir having taken his due, the rest becomes the lawful possession of the grower. By the process I have above described, a vast quantity of corn is thrashed and winnowed, in an incredibly short space of time."

We cannot find a better place to break off our article, than with these novelties, since the Babylonian Princess is not remarkable for observing order in her narrative: and digresses from particular adventures to general customs, with bewildering rapidity. We shall return again, for some more illustrations of Oriental life and opinion.

Contributions to the Eclectic Review. By John Foster. 2 vols. Ward.

Lectures delivered at Broadhead Chapel, Bristol. By John Foster. Jackson & Walford.

"HAWKS," says the proverb "do not pick out hawks' eyes," and the obvious moral is, that reviewers should pass unscathed by criticism. Mr. Foster, however, appears before us, not only as a reviewer, but as an essayist; and in the latter capacity he is brought fairly within the jurisdiction of the court. Some of our quarterly reviewers indeed could scarcely plead privilege, for their critiques are mere essays, for which the books brought under their notice serve as texts; but Mr. Foster's contributions to the *Eclectic* were for the most part strictly reviews, and very rarely travelled out of the record. As a critic Mr. Foster referred everything to one moral standard, which the readers of these collected critiques, will probably feel to have been a little too rigid and invariable; he required in every thing a high moral purpose, a direct religious tendency, and an immediate reference of all deductions of reason to the established positions of revelation. Laudable as such principles are for the guidance of public writers, it makes some difference whether they are adopted simply and for themselves, irrespective of all other considerations; or whether they have been taken up in a polemical spirit with a direct reference to their antagonism to certain other principles with which they are pre-supposed to be irreconcilable. Polemical morality is likely to fall into asceticism; polemical religion is not unfrequently oblivious of Christian charity; and a polemical adherence to Scripture has a strong tendency to assign narrow limits to the range of human inquiry. A combination of these causes too frequently renders an author the writer for a clique and not for a country; he begins to look for sectarian appreciation, and thus unconsciously imbibes a sectarian spirit. While such a course wins loud applause within his own circle, it tends to limit the range of influence, especially as all ears more readily recognize the applause close at hand, than its distant echoes. No one who has watched the course of our periodical literature for the last twenty years, can have avoided perceiving that it has a strong and, we fear, an increasing tendency to become partisan. It is the avowed object of every religious and political party formed in this country, to have as soon as possible a literary organ,—not merely a newspaper, but a critical journal, which will discuss all the subjects of high philosophy in the spirit of a sect, and for the support of a prescribed creed. The public have gained something by this; the subjects reserved for higher intellect in the closet have been brought out, rendered a general property, and placed in countless varieties of form before the common mind of the country; but we doubt whether philosophy itself has been an equal gainer; we fear that topics which irritate prejudice and excite passion have been mischievously associated with subjects with which they had no necessary connexion, and that the range of philosophic investigation has been thus limited and restricted.

Mr. Foster has not escaped from the sectarian bias we have attempted to describe, but its influence over him was modified by the sympathies of his nature, by his love of the beautiful, and by his having early learned to receive nothing as true which was purely conventional. The rigid rule of the censor is fairly stated in the review of Macdiarmid's *British Statesmen*:—

"On the ground of morality in the abstract, separately from any consideration of the effect of his representations, the biographer of statesmen is bound to a very strict application of the rules of justice, since these men constitute, or at least belong to, the uppermost class of the inhabitants of the earth. The

have stronger inducements arising from situation, than other men, to be solicitous for the rectitude of their conduct; their station has the utmost advantage for commanding the assistance of whatever illumination a country contains; they see on the large scale the effect of all the grand principles of action; they make laws for the rest of mankind, and they direct the execution of justice. If the eternal laws of morality are to be applied with a soft and lenient hand in the trial and judgment of such an order of men, it will not be worth while to apply them at all to the subordinate classes of mankind; as a morality that exacts but little where the means and the responsibility are the greatest, would betray itself to contempt by pretending to sit in solemn judgment on the humbler subjects of its authority. The laws of morality should operate, like those of nature, in the most palpable manner on the largest substances."

In the review of Paley's *Sermons*, we find a passage which very fairly describes some of the deficiencies into which polemical views of subjects frequently lead writers; the passage is well conceived and expressed, and might be supposed to have a reference to individual consciousness:—

"A mind, predetermined perhaps by its original structure, and therefore accustomed from early youth to seek the *rationale*, as it used to be termed, of every subject, would come to have little esteem for the lighter matters of imagery and sentiment. Its attention would instantly fix on the hard and supporting parts of all doctrines and systems, as the eye of John Hunter almost involuntarily examined the anatomical structure of all animal forms that came in his view, often quite forgetting all the beauties of complexion, colour, or gloss, and perhaps sometimes regarding even the most ornamental appearances of the superficial substance as but disagreeable obstructions to his desired research into the conformation of the bones. Such a mind views all subjects as placed in a state of controversy by opposite propositions and argumentations, and regards it as the noblest, indeed the only noble intellectual achievement, to carry a question through the conflict of adverse arguments, and in the result to establish some one thing as true, consolidating its proofs by a demolition of all that opposes; and therefore this argumentative mind makes little use or account of any forces but the rigid ones of the understanding, leaving everything that relates to decoration and attraction to the taste and fancy of orators and poets. If a builder of ships of war happens to walk through a forest, he will take little notice of trees recommended by taper elegance on the one side of his path, or by beautiful foliage and blossoms on the other; it is the oak that his eye naturally searches for, and fixes on with the most interest; and even in looking at that, he does not care about the rich mass of green shade, the fine contour of its form, or the wreaths of woodbine that may be climbing and flowering round its stem; he is thinking precisely of the *timber*, which is to brave storms and artillery."

The defects intimated in this passage as likely to be found in Paley, pervade the whole of Mr. Foster's review of Plumptre's 'Defence of the Stage.' His whole argument is directed against "the woodbine and foliage," and their supposed interference with the growth of "timber":—

"It must be quite obvious for what purpose it is that society chooses to have a theatre, and by what part of society it must be principally supported. And Mr. Plumptre knows it would be disingenuous trifling to pretend that the theatre is raised and supported with any other view on the part of the public than that of amusement. A very few individuals may occasionally, or even habitually, attend it for the purpose of philosophical observation; but even if these were sincerely anxious to apply the knowledge of human nature there acquired to the service of virtue and religion, which is rarely the case, the circumstance would be inexpressibly too trivial to be mentioned against the notorious fact, that the part of the community that require and frequent a theatre, do it for no purpose even the most distantly related to moral improvement. This would be testified, if it needed any testimony, by every one who has listened to the afternoon conversation of a party arranging

and preparing to go to the play, and to the retrospective discussion of this party during the eleven o'clock breakfast on the following morning; or by any one who has listened to the remarks made around him in any part of the boxes, pit, or galleries. The persons who are intent on moral or intellectual improvement will be found occupied in a very different manner, inspecting the works of the great historians, philosophers, moralists, or divines, or holding rational conversations with their families or friends, or even (if they judge instruction really is to be obtained from that source) reading the most celebrated dramatic works in their own or another language, and with a far more judicious and scrutinizing attention than any one exerts amidst the thousand interfering and beguiling circumstances of the theatre."

Now we deny that amusement alone is the purpose for which society has a theatre, and we still further deny that such a purpose would in any way be a proof of immorality. It is easy to make a parade of the real or supposed vices of those who attend theatres, but it would be just as easy to make a very strong case against the amusements of those who abstain from going to theatres. The sectarian view of the matter leaves out of sight the great truth, that relaxation of some kind is necessary both to physical and intellectual health; the argument is worthless unless all recreation be proved sinful, and from such premises it would be easy to deduce arguments for closing the National Gallery and the Zoological Gardens.

On another subject the exclusiveness of the standard erected by Mr. Foster, is still more conspicuous. His review of 'Southey's Curse of Kehama' points out the artistic defects in this gorgeous but not very consistent melo-dramatic epic; but his chief reprobation is directed against the *paganism* of the poem:—

"The present fiction, so far and so long as the force of poetry (which the poet would have augmented indefinitely if he could) can render the illusion prevalent on the mind, is not only the making void of the true religion, and the substitution of another and a vile theology in its place; it is no less than the substitution of a positive and notorious system of Paganism. It vacates the eternal throne, not only to raise thither an imaginary divinity, but absolutely to elevate Seeva, the adored abomination of the Hindoos. He is as much, and as gravely attempted to be represented as a reality, as he could be by the poets of those heathens themselves."

We have no wish to depreciate Mr. Foster, though we do not think very highly of his intellectual power; our object is rather to show how a mind becomes narrowed and confined under the influence of the sectarianism which is spreading itself over our periodical literature. The reviewer's desk is neither the lawyer's bar nor the preacher's pulpit; we have neither to speak from a brief nor to lecture from a creed; our proper object is to dissociate truth from all party associations. As an essayist or a lecturer a man has a just right to set forth the elements of his own individuality, and of that individuality, his associations of sect and party must form no inconsiderable portion. Mr. Foster exactly reverses this course; he is far more universal as a lecturer than as a reviewer; there are many passages in his lectures, particularly those embodying his reflections on external nature, which manifest larger sympathies and a wider philosophy than we can discover in the greater part of his reviews.

We shall not dwell further on this subject, but merely express a hope that periodical literature may free itself from sectarian trammels, and enable such men as Mr. Foster to contribute to reviews without being exposed to the danger of forgetting the philosopher in the partisan.

Tarlton's Jest and News out of Purgatory: with Notes, and some Account of the Life of Tarlton. By J. O. Halliwell, Esq. F.R.S.
[Second Notice.]

THE Jig to which we alluded in our former notice and which we shall now quote, is a good example of the personalities which were called humour by our fathers, and made their utterers so dear to the audiences of the 16th century. The personal reflections upon the actor's self, with which it opens, were probably meant to cover his assumption of the right to be personal upon others—at the same time that they confirm what we have hinted, of the probable understanding between him and his hearers, that his own bodily defects were an avowed portion of his spells—that the cast in the eye and the flat nose were good jokes in themselves. Mr. Collier, who has quoted a part of this jig, in his 'New Facts regarding the Life of Shakespeare,' is of opinion that the actor introduced to the audience, in illustration of its several presentations, a variety of puppets, suitably dressed:—

Tarlton's Jigge of a horse load of Fooles.

What do you lacke? what do ye lacke?
Ive a horse load of fooles,
Squeaking, gibbering of everie degree;
I'me an excellent workeman
And these are my tooles:
Is not this a fine merie familie?

Here is one of the familie,
His name it is Dicke,
Squeaking, &c.
Hes his fathers none sonne,
For he has the trickie:
He comes of a fine merie familie.

He is truly a player foole,
And soe you may him call,
Squeaking, &c.
You may see his goodly counterfeit
Hung up on everie wall.

You never can misse the likennesse,
For everie bodie knowes,
Squeaking, &c.
His fathers lovelie visnomic,
His two eyes and flat nose.

He has alsoe, I warraund ye,
His fathers wondrous witt,
Squeaking, &c.
Soe no more at the present time
There needes be said of it.
He comes of a rare wittie familie.

And here you may see I have
Even such an other,
Squeaking, &c.
The player fooles deare darling pigmie
He calles himselfe his brother,
Come of the verie same familie.

This foole he is a Puritane,
Goose son* we call him right,
Squeaking, &c.
A most notorious piedbalde foole,
For sure a hippocrite:
Of a verie numerous familie.

Of the familie of Love, like a player, he is not,
Squeaking, &c.
The thing that he seemes comonlie,
But is, God it wot,
Of a verie cattlike familie.

I durst not say all that he is,
Yot may guesse it that can:
Squeaking, &c.
I call him that he calles him selfe,
That is a Puritan,
Of a verie truth telling familie.

This one that in my hand I holde,
I call him a foole of State,
Squeaking, &c.
And being borne verie little,
Would faine be verie great;
Of a verie antient familie.

You see in his apparrell
He most trickiest is and brave,
Squeaking, &c.
But true lie in his countenance
Most marvellouslie grave:
Of a most court loving familie.

Wise he is most certainlie
In striving soe to looke,
Squeaking, &c.
As though within his braine he had
Some philosophers booke,
Of Solon's or Solomon's familie.

* A curious allusion to Gosson, whose 'School of Abuse,' 1579, has been reprinted by the Shakespeare Society.
† Clever. See the Tempest, act V., sc. I.

Could you turne him inside out,
You would presentlie see,
Squeaking, &c.
He is a more true begotten foole
Then ever I bee,
And not of so merie a familie.

This one you perchance might know
By his dresse and his shape,
Squeaking, &c.
Is a poett, or if he is not soe,
He is a poett ape:
They are of the same familie.

He has got of scollershippe
The redd carrot nose,
Squeaking, &c.
With drinkinge and canarie
At the flat or the Rose:
Of a rare wine-bibing familie.

Yet some times he must stint him selfe
And live on a leake,
Squeaking, &c.
The while he writeth pastoralls
For us players to speake:
Of a right lying familie.

Or makes by the bushell madrigalls
Or ballades for to sell,
Squeaking, &c.
I, his father, can make them almost
O' the suddaine quite as well:
Of a verie ballatting familie.

This now is wise doctor Dunne,
A verie noted foole,
Squeaking, &c.
Who thinke you nothing can be done
But by olde Galen his rule:
Of a verie poisoning familie.

He killeth us all I weene
With such skill and arte,
Squeaking, &c.
He makes dying quite a pleasure:
When death doe us departs.
Of a wonderfull learned familie.

Yet is he no such foole like verie sur,
As I will now you tell,
Squeaking, &c.
If he makes you thinke you sicke,
Whennas indeede you are well:
Of a verie wilye familie.

If he maketh you paie money
For making you ill,
Squeaking, &c.
You are the greatest foolles of all,
And say it I will:
Of a most innocent familie.

This one, now, is a lover foole:
Nee, it is not this; I lye.
Yet it is, I sweare by Cupido:
Hist, you may heare him sigh:
Of a verie windie familie.

All the livelong wearie dale
With his armes across,
Squeaking, &c.
Singing this dittle to his lute,
O, my lucke is losse:
Of a most melancholicke familie.

He is of all the rest the most
Pittifull foole in dede,
Squeaking, &c.
God helpe him, for his friendes sake,
In his sute to speede:
And for the sake of his familie.

God bye, God bye, with your ragged haire
And your band untied,
Squeaking, &c.
Tis pittie, as you say your selfe,
When borne you had not died;
But of a short livde familie.

This foole comes of the citizens.
Nay, prethee, doe not frowne:
I knowe him as well as you
By his liverie gowne.
Of a rare borne mad familie.

He is a foole by prenticeship
And servitude, he sayes,
And hates all kindes of wisdom,
But most of all in playes:
Of a verie obstinate familie.

You have him in his liverie gowne,
But presently he can,
Qualifie for a mule or a mare,
Or for an Alderman:
With a golde chaine in his familie.

Being borne and bred for a foole,
Why should he be wise?
It would make him not fit to sitt
With his bretheren of Ass-ize:
Of a verie long earde familie.

Here you see a country foole
Just come to towne,
Squeaking, &c.
To be made a gentleman
From a rustick clowne;
Of a Somersetsshire familie.

If he comes but to the Curtaine,
I promise he shall see
Squeaking, &c.

A gentleman made a verie clowne,
And this is by me:
Of a most mottley familie.

He must change his russetting
For satin and silke,
And he must weare no linnen shirt
That is not white as milke,
To come of a well borne familie.

This advice I profer him:
To be a gentleman,
Or to seeme soe to judicious eyes,
Speake as foolish as he can:
It longeth to the familie.

I have many other foolles here,
And all of sundry sort,
Lawyer foolles, Sir John foolles,
Foolles of the Court;
A large and loving familie.

But neverint univers,
Good neighbours, I have done:
You have seene my horse load of foolles,
And I must now be gone
With my most merie familie.

But sitt you merrie, gentleman,
For wise men doe say,
Squeaking, &c.
A foolles bolt is soone shott: ist so?
I bid you all good day.
Hey, ree, horse, with my familie.

If the case of Tarlton, like that of the extemporaneous actor in general, had been left to rest on the accumulated testimony of his contemporaries, we must, of course, have taken him at their estimate. His unbounded popularity must have been accepted as the measure of his wit, and we could only have regretted that succeeding generations were deprived of a share in its enjoyment. We should have grieved over the man of genius, whose genius took such perishing forms, without suspecting the quality of the genius itself, or the competence of the witnesses. But what survives to our generations of the products of Tarlton's fancy, rather tends to beget a suspicion that, in the cases of actors of this class, publication would generally be more a misfortune than a privilege, and that such a fame as his would have been most securely left to the keeping of tradition. Unhappily for his repute, there are documents to aid in the revision of its titles. Mr. Halliwell publishes, from the registers of the Stationers' Company, a list of pieces relating to, or written by Tarlton; all of which have perished, together with most of the ballads and minor pieces of that actor—or, at least, none of them are known to exist: but the actor is known to the bibliographer and collector by the rare tracts here reprinted. It is Mr. Halliwell's opinion, as we understand him, that these tracts have contributed to the posthumous reputation of Tarlton: but with ourselves, it is a very strong impression, that, (in so far as they commit the actor at all—for, it is to be observed, he is not the writer of either of them) to that extent they reduce the estimate of his value which is based upon the sum of contemporary report. The second, the 'News out of Purgatory,' was published shortly after Tarlton's death, by an author who, avowing that it is his first appearance in print, obviously makes use of Tarlton's popular name, merely, as our editor observes, "as an additional attraction for the purchaser." Tarlton is made to appear to the author in a vision, and bring him tidings from Purgatory; many of the old legends respecting which intermediate place of spirits the work embodies. In the year 1590, appeared an answer (as it is strangely called,) to this tract, under the title of 'The Coblur of Caunterbury,' which Mr. Halliwell has likewise reprinted, in the Appendix; and the one and the other are merely *reficamentos* of such stories as the age loved,—full "pleasaut conceiptes," "delightfull devise and quaint myrthe," but reflecting little honour upon the taste or morality of the times. With the 'News from Purgatory,' then, Tarlton had nothing to do. The 'Jests' are a collection of "good things" ascribed to him; and it is, we well know, the fate of men having a reputation of the

same character as Tarlton's to have many "good things," placed to their credit, which they never uttered. It is, of course, not very easy to decide which of these are authentic, as Mr. Halliwell allows; but it is somewhat in favour of their general authenticity that the collection is not a very large one; and there are signs of authenticity about many of its articles. Here then, it is, that we have Tarlton's remains; and we naturally refer to them, to see what kind of pleasantry it was that made our fathers so merry. And, heaven save the mark! how small a matter made them laugh. "The modern reader," says Mr. Halliwell, "will be rather at a loss to discover the merit of many of Tarlton's 'Jests'; but he must recollect that none of the recorded witticisms of his times are very brilliant." In good sooth, it must have been a generation well inclined to laugh, that was so merrily overcome by humour of this proof. The "smallest donations" appear to have been very thankfully received, and very liberally acknowledged. If this actor's stage-humour was all of the same quality, we see, at once, how much must have depended on look and gesture—on that which has died with himself, and left only these "dry bones." Assuredly, some of these "self-same words," if they be such as when "spoken by him," are said to have "forced the dead soul to laughter," they are such as, "spoken by another, would hardly move a merry man to smile." If his comic powers were "unrivalled," and, as the editor deduces from the testimony of the times—"almost miraculous," then was he one of the children of genius, of whom we have spoken, who live but for their day, and the instrument of his power for ruling the spirits of man, has gone with him to his grave.

We must give our readers a few draughts of the Tarlton vintage; and shall be greatly mistaken if they find it an intoxicating beverage. Some of the racy properties which produced such an effect of exhilaration on the audiences of his day, must have evaporated in the keeping—in proof of which, our first specimen shall be a sample of those fancies which his humour generated in its peculiar element, the theatre—under the direct fermenting influence of the popular applause:—

"An excellent jest of Tarlton suddenly spoken."

"At the Bull at Bishopsgate was a play of Henry the fift, wherein the judge was to take a box on the eare; and because he was absent that should take the blow, Tarlton himselfe, ever forward to please, tooke upon him to play the same judge, besides his owne part of the clowne: and Knel, then playing Henry the fift, hit Tarlton a sound boxe indeed, which made the people laugh the more because it was he, but anon the judge goes in, and immediately Tarlton in his clownes clothes comes out, and askes the actors what newes: O saith one hadst thou been here, thou shouldst have seene Prince Henry hit the judge a terrible box on the eare: What, man, said Tarlton, strike a judge? It is true, yfaith, said the other. No other like, said Tarlton, and it could not be but terrible to the judge, when the report so terrifies me, that me thinkes the blow remains still on my cheek, that it burnes againe. The people laught at this mightily: and to this day I have heard it commended for rare; but no marvel for he had many of these. But I would see our clownes in these dayes do the like: no, I warrant ye, and yet they thinke well of themselves to."

Nor is much more to be said of his out-door and unprofessional wit. It is the smallest of small beer—and very often sour, as in the following instances:—

"A jest of Tarlton, proving mustard to have wit."

"Tarlton keeping an ordinary in Paternoster Row, and sitting with gentlemen to make them merry, would approve mustard standing before them to have wit. How so? saies one. It is like a witty scold, meeting another scold, knowing that scold will scold,

begins to scold first: so, saies he, the mustard being lickt up, and knowing that you will bite it, begins to bite you first. He try that, saies a gull by; and the mustard so tickled him that his eyes watered. How now, saies Tarlton; does my jest savour? I, saies the gull, and bite too. If you had had better wit, saies Tarlton, you would have bit first: so then conclude with me that dumbe unfeeling mustard hath more wit than a talking unfeeling foole, as you are. Some were pleased, and some were not; but all Tarlton's care was taken for his resolution was ever, [?] before he talkt any jest."

"One askt Tarlton what country man the devell was. In Carter Lane dwelt a merry cobbler, who being in company with Tarlton, askt him what countryman the devell was: quoth Tarlton, a Spaniard, for Spaniards, like the devell, trouble the whole world."

Mr. Halliwell has, voluntarily, sacrificed "the purity of the ancient text," by the rejection of two articles, which are in the original manuscript, because of their grossness; but certainly he cannot be fairly accused of "squeamishness," considering some that he has retained. These anecdotes are, indeed, curious illustrations of the coarseness of the times—at court, as much as elsewhere. Tarlton, it should be observed, was groom of the chamber to Queen Elizabeth, and a privileged jester to Her Majesty:—

"How Tarlton plaid the drunkard before the Queene. The Queene being discontented, which Tarlton perceiving, took upon him to delight her with some quaint jest: whereupon he counterfeited a drunkard and called for beere, which was brought immediately. Her Majestie, noting his humor, commanded that he should have no more; for, quoth shee, he will play the beast, and so shame himselfe. Feare not you, quoth Tarlton, for your beere is small enough. Whereat Her Majestie laughed heartily, and commanded that he should have enough."

"How Tarlton flouted a lady in the court."

"Upon a time, Tarlton being among certaine ladies at a banquet which was at Greenwich, the Queene then lying there, one of the ladies had her face full of pimples with heat at her stomack; for which cause she refused to drinke wine amongst the rest of the ladies: which Tarlton perceiving, for he was there of purpose to jest amongst them, quoth he: A murren of that face, which makes all the body fare the worse for it. At which the rest of the ladies laugh, and she, blushing for shame, left the banquet."

It was necessary to give a coarse anecdote like the last, in order to show the offensive character of what was not only permitted, but accepted for humour, by Tarlton's cotemporaries—and to illustrate the manners of a court in which pleasantries of this savour was one of the established recreations. But the following we will take leave to place amongst the *Apocrypha* of these "Jests"; because, if it could be deemed authentic, it would exhibit the virgin-queen in an aspect as thoughtless and irreverent as many of the others show her coarse—and though a very foolish princess in trifles, she was a tolerably wise one where matters of serious concernment were in question:—

"How a parsonage fell into Tarlton's hands."

"Her Majestie, dining in the Strand, at the Lord Treasurers, the lords were very desirous that she would vouchsafe to stay all night, but nothing could prevail with her. Tarlton was in his clownes apparell, being all dinner while in the presence with her, to make her merry; and hearing the sorrow that the noblemen made that they could not worke her stay, he asked the nobles what they would give him to worke her stay. The lords promised him any thing to performe it. Quoth he, procure me the parsonage of Shard. They caused the patent to be drawne presently. He got on a parson's gowne and a corner-cap, and, standing upon the stairs, where the queene should descend, he repeated these words: A parson or no parson? A parson or no parson? But, after she knew his meaning, shee not only stayd all night, but the next day willed he should have possession of the benefice. A madder parson was never, for he threatned to turne the bellmettle into lynng

for his purse; which he did, the parsonage and all, into ready money."

We will take upon us, also, to doubt the following anecdote, not included in this collection of "Jests," but related on the authority of Bohm; because, it is anything but characteristic of the impatient sovereign at whose expense it is told. If true, it would prove that Queen Elizabeth found, occasionally, the inconvenience of such an addition as a licensed jester to the suite of princes—but she was not a lady to bear being bitten by the dog she kept to hunt with:—

"Tarlton **** had made a pleasant play, and when it was acting before the Queen, he pointed at Sir Walter Raleigh, and said, See the Knave commands the Queen; for which he was corrected by a frown from the Queen; yet he had the confidence to add that he was of too much and too intolerable a power; and going on with the same liberty, he reflected on the over-great power and riches of the Earl of Leicester, which was so universally applauded by all that were present, that she thought fit for the present to bear these reflections with a seeming unconcernedness. But yet she was so offended, that she forbade Tarlton, and all her jesters, from coming near her table, being inwardly displeased with this impudent and unreasonable liberty."

Of a like quality with the above are most of the "good things" ascribed to Tarlton. He said, for instance, that "hee could compare Queene Elizabeth to nothing more fitly than to a sculler; for, said he, neither the Queene nor the sculler hath a fellow." A few are better. He "called Burley-house-gate, in the Strand, towards the Savoy, the L. Treasurer's Almes-gate, because it was never opened." "There was a nobleman who asked Tarlton what hee thought of soldiers in time of peace. Marry, quoth he, they are like chimnies in summer." "Tarlton, meeting a rich Londoner, fell into talke about the Bishop of Peterborough, highly praising his bountie to his servants, his liberality to strangers, his great hospitality and charity to the poore: he doeth well, sayes the rich man, for what he hath, he hath but during his life. Why, quoth Tarlton, for how many lives have you your goods?"

To Mr. Halliwell and the Shakespeare Society the public are muchindebted for this reprint, as they are to all who contribute to the illustration of the manners of an age, out of whose intellectual level Shakespeare soared, or bring into the light of the present, for more assured testing, the uncertain reputations of that time. There is no more striking proof of the unparalleled homage which has been paid to Shakespeare in our century, than the circumstance that we have stumbled upon a thousand things characteristic or descriptive of an age, that forms a chapter of great importance in the history of thought, in the accidents of the mere search by which we have endeavoured to follow the mighty poet over its entire field. Our debt to the editor and his Society is enhanced by the fact stated by the former, that "not only would it be in vain to look in the British Museum for either of the tracts now reprinted, but few of the rarer pieces quoted in the preceding pages have hitherto found their way into our national library." The incidents of Tarlton's unprofessional life, which it has been possible to collect, are few. The period of his birth is nowhere mentioned, and its place is not certainly known; but he was an author as early as 1570. He appears to have been a tavern-keeper at one period of his life, was one of twelve who were made Queen's players (the first) and groom of the chamber in 1583, and died in 1588, probably of the plague, for he made his will, expired, and was buried on the same day. Little more is known: but the volume, with its quaint and characteristic portrait (reduced by Mr. Shaw from an original drawing in the British Museum) of one whose

name is more frequently alluded to than almost any other "in the whole circle of Elizabethan literature, forms an appropriate gift to the literary loungers or investigators in that field from a "Shakespeare Society."

Neurypnology, or the Rationale of Nervous Sleep. By James Braid. *Mesmerism, its History, Phenomena, and Practice.* By William Lang.

THERE is a class of people to whom a calm and quiet contemplation of Nature, in order to unfold her laws, is irksome,—whose minds are nevertheless endowed with love and admiration of the wonderful results to which the investigations of the man of science often lead. To such people is denied the power of discerning between the true and the false, and amidst their dim wonderings at the phenomena and laws of nature, the discoveries of Galileo and Harvey, and the visions of Swedenborg and Jacob Boehme, the researches of Bell, and the speculations of Gall, the strict inductions of Louis, and the hypotheses of Hahnemann, all assume the same value. Incapable alike of analyzing phenomena themselves, or determining the value of the analysis of others, they eagerly embrace whatever startling novelty may be presented to their minds, as an advance in human knowledge, and an accession to man's power over external nature. Minds thus constituted are found in all classes of society, and even amongst the more carefully educated in the professions, are not uncommon. In no class does this mental conformation become more conspicuous than amongst medical men, as it is in their pursuits that the greatest opportunity is afforded of developing theories which, on account of the incapability of the public to discern at once their absurdity, may be made the means of gaining temporary applause, or subserving the pecuniary interests of the theorizer. We have often expressed our opinion of the so-called sciences of Phrenology and Mesmerism, and had hoped that both would, ere this, have been consigned to the lumber-room, where most people of common sense have stowed astrology, alchemy, hobgoblins, and witches; but we find from the books before us that we were mistaken, and that these two monstrosities, unable to stand alone, have entered into the hands of matrimony, and, according to Mr. Lang, "the Rev. La Roy Sunderland is understood to have been the individual who first, on the other side of the Atlantic, proclaimed the banns of the union between mesmerism and phrenology." We should have anticipated a curious progeny from such a union, but the result, as detailed in these volumes, has exceeded anything that the most grotesque imagination could have looked for; but we must refer those who can take an interest in such sciences, to the works themselves. Mr. Lang's book, as a history of mesmerism, and of the modern development of the delusion, is tolerably complete. It is full of attempts at expressing indignation at those who do not adopt his views of the physical and moral derangement exhibited by the victims of mesmeric sleep. Mr. Braid is, we believe, a gentleman practising medicine in Manchester, who has been unwarily taken in the net of mesmerism, but not liking much his companions, he has christened the science anew, calling it Neurypnology. Considerable doubt seems to be entertained as to the genuineness of Mr. Braid's belief in animal magnetism, but we think that such a doubt will be dispelled by the perusal of this work; and we can assure the mesmerists of the old school that they need not be afraid of admitting the neurypnologists into their company.

List of New Books.—Barber's Picturesque Illustrations of the Isle of Wight, with Historical and Topographical Description, new edit. 8vo. 10s. 6d. cl.—Guide to German Conversation and Letter Writing, edited by W. Kluener Klatowski, 12mo. 5s. cl.—The Works of William Robertson, D.D., with Life, &c., by Dugald Stewart, new edit. 1 vol. medium 8vo. 18s. cl. lettered.—The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, by Edward Gibbon, Esq., with Life, by A. Chalmers, new edit. 1 vol. medium 8vo. 18s. cl.—Epochs of the Church of Lyons, 1 vol. 8vo. 3s. 6d. cl.—Alford's Psalms and Hymns for Sundays and Holydays, 18mo. 2s. 6d. cl.—Tales of the Martyrs, or Sketches from Church History, 2nd edit. 18mo. 4s. cl.—Williams's (Rev. J.) Gospel Narrative of our Lord's Nativity, 8vo. 8s. 6d. cl.—The Book of Revelation, in Greek and English, 8vo. 5s. 6d. cl.—Arnold's Christian Life, its Course, &c., 3rd edit. 8vo. 12s. cl.—Boyd's Sermons on the Church, 8vo. 4s. 6d. cl.—Tholuck's University Sermons, translated by Lady A. Man-

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DESTRUCTION OF ANTIQUITIES OF IRELAND.

It is much to be regretted that the Society lately established in England, having for its object the preservation of British antiquities, did not extend its design over those of the Sister Island—which are daily becoming fewer and fewer in number. That the gold ornaments which are so frequently found in various parts of Ireland, should be melted down for the sake of the very pure gold* of which they are composed, is scarcely surprising, but that carved stones and even immense druidical remains should be destroyed, is indeed greatly to be lamented. At one of the late meetings of the Royal Irish Academy, a communication was made of the intention of the proprietor of the estate at New Grange, to destroy that most gigantic relic of druidical times, which has justly been termed the Irish pyramid, merely because its vast size "cumbereth the ground." At Mellifont a modern corn-mill of large size has been built out of the stones of the beautiful monastic buildings; some of which still adorn that charming spot. At Monasterboice, the church-yard of which contains one of the finest of the round towers, are the ruins of two of the little ancient stone Irish churches, and three most elaborately carved stone crosses eighteen or twenty feet high. The church-yard itself is overrun with weeds; the sanctity of the place being its only safeguard. At Clonmacnoise, where some forty years ago several hundred inscriptions in the ancient Irish character were to be seen upon the grave-stones, scarcely a dozen (and they the least interesting) are now to be found; the large flat stones, on which they were carved, forming excellent slabs for doorways, the copings of walls, &c. It was the discovery of some of these carved stones in such a situation, which had the effect of directing the attention of Mr. Petre (then an artist in search of the picturesque, but now one of the most enlightened and conscientious of the Irish antiquaries) to the study of antiquities, and it is upon the careful series of drawings made by him, that future antiquaries must rely for very much of ancient architectural detail now destroyed. As to Glendaloch, it is so much a holiday place for the Dubliners, that no wonder every thing portable has disappeared. Two or three of the seven churches are levelled to the ground, all the characteristic carvings described by Ledwich, and which were "quite unique in Ireland," are gone—some were removed and used as key-stones for the arches of Derry-bawn bridge. Part of the church-yard has been cleared of its grave-stones, and forms a famous place where the villagers play at ball against the old walls of the church. The little church called St. Kevin's Kitchen is given up to the sheep, and the font lies in one corner, and is used for the vilest purposes. The abbey church is choked up with trees and brambles, and being a little out of the way a very few carved stones still remain there, two of the most interesting of which, I found used as coping-stones to the wall which surrounds it. The connexion between the ancient churches of Ireland and the north of England, renders the preservation of the Irish antiquities especially interesting to the English antiquarian, and it is with the hope of drawing attention to the destruction of those ancient Irish monuments that I have written these few lines. The Irish themselves are unfortunately so engrossed with political and religious controversies, that it can scarcely be hoped that single-handed they will be roused to the rescue even of these evidences of their former national greatness. Besides, a great obstacle exists against any interference with the religious antiquities of the country, from the

strong feelings entertained by the people on the subject, although practically, as we have seen, of so little weight. Let us hope that the public attention directed to these objects will have a beneficial result, and insure a greater share of "justice to Ireland"—for will it be believed that the only establishment in Ireland for the propagation and diffusion of scientific and antiquarian knowledge—the Royal Irish Academy—receives annually the munificent sum of 300l. from the government? And yet, notwithstanding this pittance, the members of that society have made a step in the right direction, by the purchase of the late Dean of St. Patrick's Irish Archaeological Collection, of which a fine series of drawings is now being made at the expense of the Academy, and of which they would doubtless allow copies to be made, so as to obtain a return of a portion of the expense to which they are now subjected? Small, moreover, as this collection is, it forms a striking contrast with our own National Museum, which, rich in foreign antiquities, is almost without a single object of native archaeological interest, if we except the series of English and Anglo-Saxon coins, and MSS. Surely the progressive history of the arts of our own country deserves a place in the British Museum, and yet this has not hitherto been afforded to it: in this respect, even the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford must take precedence; whilst in Ethnographical collections, the little Museum of the British Institution may be cited as an example fit to be followed; for strange indeed does it seem that with the exception of the few specimens brought home by Capt. Cook from the South Sea Islands, the national museum of our country, whose intercourse with every quarter of the globe is so immense, is destitute of specimens of the manufactures, carvings, paintings, &c. of the inhabitants of almost every part of the world. The Chinese Collection, at Hyde Park Corner, and Mr. Catlin's Collection, ought not to be allowed to be broken up. These would form a fitting nucleus for an Ethnographical addition to the British Museum.

J. O. W.

A WEEK AMONG THE GLACIERS.

BY DR. H. A. GRANT.

[THOUGH we have become somewhat familiar of late years with the Glaciers, still the particulars of a visit by a man of science are worthy of record; we are obliged to Prof. Silliman for this pleasant narrative.]

By the present arrangement of the government, the ascent of Mont Blanc is very expensive, in consequence of the great number of guides requisite to be taken; and it is also annoying by the forms and ceremonies attendant on such an expedition. When a party intend making the ascent, mass is previously said in the village church, for the safety of the guides and travellers; and the guides, for whom more especially it is said, are obliged to attend. On the whole it is rather an imposing sight, to see these sturdy mountaineers attending this religious ceremony, before attempting to brave the dangers of an ascent.

The attempt to ascend Mont Blanc was to me quite unexpected, for I did not wish to risk for myself the dangers of an ascent, and much less the lives of the guides necessary to such an excursion. But being in company with two English gentlemen, who determined to attempt it, I was persuaded to make it with them.

Having made known our intentions to the *hôteleur*, he immediately sent for Couttet, who selected from the most trustworthy of the guides, eighteen for us; and six more, after seeing the preparation of eatables and drinkables the landlord had prepared for our journey, volunteered to accompany us, for the privilege of free access to our haversacks. Every thing being arranged the night previous, we breakfasted the following morning, July 15th, at 4 o'clock. The hotel presented at this early hour a lively scene, while the guides were depositing in the different haversacks the provisions which had been prepared, and which were truly in amount enormous for the time we anticipated being absent.

One hour later and we were already skirting the base of the mountain, myself and two friends on mules; and in this way we proceeded, till we entered the thick growth of pines that clothes the mountain side, through which we wound our way, until the broken fragments of rocks and the trunks of fallen trees prevented the further progress of the

mules, when we dismounted and sent them back, while we proceeded on foot through the pines, which now becoming less and less thrifty, soon ceased altogether, and nothing but the barren rocks, with only here and there a scraggy shrub, till about 9 o'clock we arrived at the point of perpetual snow, where we halted to take a second *déjeuner à la fourchette*.

It was at this point we determined to enter upon the Glacier des Bossons, and crossing it, to ascend the mountain on the opposite side, which would, we conceived to be easier and less dangerous than continuing our course up the glacier to the Grandes Mulets, which was the point we wished to gain as a resting place for the night.

Here I made an experiment to test the diurnal advance of the glacier. I took three large blocks of stone, with the smoothest faces I could find, and having placed them in a straight line about ten feet distant from each other, I sighted (in the usual manner of farmers in setting a post and rail fence) along the smooth faces of the stones which were turned towards the summit of the mountain. I then had three other stones carried on the glacier at the distance of fifty to sixty feet from each other, and placed in a straight line with the three former stones, and left them to mark the change which should take place in their relative positions, on my return.

A similar experiment I made in the evening on my arrival at the Grandes Mulets, and on my return to the Grandes Mulets the next day at 1 o'clock, P.M., and at the point where I had made the first experiment at 4 o'clock, P.M., which made nineteen hours for the former, and thirty-one for the latter. The stones on the glacier had descended during this time, from a line drawn from the upper surface of the stones on the mountain to the upper surface of the stones on the glacier, between twelve and thirteen inches for the former, and about twenty-one inches for the latter, which is about sixteen inches for the twenty-four hours.

The number of pulsations and respirations per minute, of the whole party, I had taken at Chamonix, previous to leaving, and found that the average was seventy-six of the former and sixteen and a half of the latter. At this point, the perpetual snow line, there was a slight acceleration, the respirations being eighteen and the pulsations eighty-two per minute, after resting fifteen minutes, and of course previous to eating, as the pulsations are augmented during the process of digestion.

At 10 o'clock, A.M. we entered upon the glacier; the travelling was at first neither difficult nor fatiguing, for we had each a well-tried Alpenstock, which was equal to a third foot in case of need, and our shoes, made for the occasion, were well armed with square-headed nails throughout the whole extent of heel and sole.

The extreme purity of this glacier is remarked by all as greater than that of either of the other glaciers in the valley of Chamonix, and its crevasses present most perfectly the bluish green, and from that to the deep blue of the gulf water. The crevasses in this glacier are much deeper, wider, and more extensive, than either of the others in this valley; and this is owing probably to its great extent, and to its being one of the most precipitous of the Alps. They vary in width from a few feet to many hundred, and taking their length, including their windings, from a few rods to one or two miles. Their depth has been estimated by De Saussure, for the deepest, at six hundred feet, which has been considered as exaggerated—an opinion in which I should agree, if this depth is given as common; but that there is one, and indeed that there are several, of this depth, below the Grand Plateau, I confidently affirm. One in particular, which I measured with a rude instrument constructed on the spot for the purpose, proved to be between eight and nine hundred feet deep; it was but a short distance from the Grandes Mulets. This crevasse, as I should judge, was about one-fourth of a mile in width, and seemed to have been formed by the inferior side sliding down to the distance mentioned above as the width of the crevasse, while its superior portion, remaining apparently stationary, (I say apparently, because the whole mass is perpetually moving onward,) had increased in height, by the additions made to it from the falling avalanches, so that the upper side rose more than two hundred feet above the inferior border of the crevasse; consequently,

* One recently discovered, and now in the possession of the Rev. Dr. Todd, is equal in weight to not fewer than 200 sovereigns.

measuring its depth from the highest point of its upper edge, it measured near nine hundred feet, while from the highest point of its inferior border, my instrument marked something less than six hundred feet. This I give as the maximum of depth of any crevasse which we observed in this ascent. The crevasses are however, generally, from a few feet to fifty or sixty deep. Many have their sides nearly perpendicular, but in the deeper ones they are always zigzag, and many of the deepest, when they are very wide, may be descended with but little risk by means of ropes and hatchets, which are a necessary accompaniment to these expeditions. The crevasses which are the most difficult and dangerous to cross, are those whose width is about sixty or eighty feet, and eighty or one hundred deep. These frequently extend to a great length, and to avoid the fatigue attendant on following them parallel to their length, an attempt is sometimes made to pass on the bridges, which have been formed by avalanches falling across them, and thus wedging in immense blocks, forming in many places a rude but substantial arch, which rises some ten or twenty feet above their borders, and as many wide, making a very safe and convenient passage, while others at their base are sufficiently wide to tread on with perfect ease and safety. At the apex of the arch, they become so narrow, by melting, that it is quite impossible to stand erect upon their summit; it being only a few inches wide, and sloped on either side like a saddle, one is obliged for a few feet to sit astride of them as on horseback, and trust to the steadiness of his nerves and the firm grasp of his knees, to accomplish a safe transit. The ascent of these bridges is much easier and less hazardous than the descent, in consequence of being compelled, while descending, to look continually into the gap of the depth below, exhibiting the precariousness of the position.

We traversed these seas of ice and snow from about 10 o'clock, A.M., till between 5 and 6 o'clock, P.M. when we arrived at the Grandes Mulets, which we should have reached at least two hours sooner, had it not been for a newly formed crevasse of very great extent; (I say newly formed, because my guides said that the year previous when they made the ascent to the Grandes Mulets it did not exist.) It was of various width throughout its length, from fifty feet to one-fourth of a mile; and in following along its side we were obliged to ascend about one thousand feet above the Grandes Mulets before we could find a place to cross it, being about two-thirds up the length of the crevasse, where turning abruptly, at nearly a right angle, it was filled for the distance of two hundred feet or more by avalanches, which had fallen from the Grand Plateau, or summit of the mount, and illustrated in the grandest and most impressive manner, the way in which gravity hurls down and piles up these immense masses of snow and ice to the height of hundreds of feet, and so equally poised upon pedestals of ice, that have been wasted by the heat of the sun, till it seems impossible that they could bear the enormous superimposed weight. In crossing the chasm at this point, we passed under these shelving masses, some of which projected one hundred feet over our path. The scene was one of wild magnificence; and it was at this point that our guides enjoined the strictest silence, and to tread with the utmost lightness and precaution, which injunction I regarded at the time as being merely an attempt *ad captandum*, in order to enhance in our estimation the value of their services. Being excessively fatigued, and being here screened from the wind and dazzling rays of the sun, I proposed to halt and rest, to which my guide in the most peremptory and positive manner objected, saying, if I attempted to stop at this point, he should be obliged to take me up and carry me from underneath this shelving ice, while at the same time, pointing to the water which was dripping slowly from its summit, and trickling down its side and base, he said it would not stand another day's sun, and any cause which should produce a slight vibration of the air, would dislodge other masses above it, which were less firmly fixed than even this one, and they would set the whole mass to tumbling headlong down. This being spoken with so much earnestness, and in a mere whisper, I proceeded. Our *valet de place*, whom we had taken with us, was immediately before me, and being rather awkward, moved very slowly, and had made one or

two false steps, which my guide seeing, advanced at once and stopped him, then told me to pass him, as a few more such steps might set some of the smaller blocks in motion, and as we were behind, we should lose our lives, by his stupidity. I passed him, and a few minutes' walk carried us to the opposite side of this dangerous pass, where we sat down to rest, and viewed from a point of safety the danger which we almost unconsciously braved. It was now frightful to see other promontories of ice, which while we were crossing had been hidden from our view, resting upon mere feathery edges, with sheets of snow dropping over their edges in festoons, appearing scarcely thick enough to support their own weight.

Our guides told us we could now prove, or rather test, the truth of their assertions respecting the powerful effect of the vibration of the air at this height, which hint we at once availed ourselves of, by ordering the whole company to give three shouts at the height of their voices, which they did, and the effect of which was quickly visible. The first shout produced no sensible movement, but with the second, though the sound produced none of that sharp echo, which we often hear in the gorges of the mountain valleys, yet its effect was manifest, first upon those festooned edges of snow which I have mentioned above, and which with another loud shout began to detach themselves in quick succession, falling in considerable sheets, till one of no great size fell some eighty feet, upon one of those huge rocks, of ice, which was poised so equally that it required but the slightest force to turn the balance, when this slid from its resting place, with but little velocity, not as fast apparently as a man would walk; but the momentum of so large a mass must have been enormous. I should judge its slide was not more than twelve or fifteen feet (though it may have been many more) when being suddenly checked, by its base coming in contact with another mass, the momentum it had acquired in its slide threw its summit beyond the centre of gravity, and it pitched headlong down the broken plane of the crevasse, which was followed by an active scene of wild and terrific confusion. Avalanche succeeded avalanche of enormous size, as the fall of one detached others larger than itself. At first their motion was slow and regular, as they merely slid from their resting places, till arrested by another mass, when they came tumbling, rolling, and bounding down as their velocity increased, till no barrier could check their impetuous course. At their onset, each could be distinctly seen, and marked amid the rest, till by their increased velocity, according to the obstacles they encountered as they rolled onward in their descent, bounding from crag to crag with resistless force, they would rend and shiver themselves and opposing obstacles into immense masses. They seemed to gain additional power from each opposing barrier, till opposer and opposed, rent into ten thousand fragments, rushed headlong, tearing, crashing, thundering down, as if possessing within themselves the elements of life; then deviating from side to side, as any solid angular inclination turned them from their forward course, till ground and broken into myriads of pieces, their forms became too indistinct to be any longer discerned. They then assumed the confused appearance of a circumscribed storm of thick hail and snow.

Those travellers who from the valley of Chamonix have seen these masses of ice falling from the summit of Mont Blanc, on the Grand Plateau, in consequence of their distance and great height, can form no idea of their size. These blocks of ice, which from the valley appear, as they are displaced, not larger than fifteen or twenty feet square, are, to those who are in their immediate vicinity, from one hundred to two hundred feet. This kind of avalanche differs from the Staub-laminen, (dust avalanche,) as they are called by the natives of the Alps, which being formed by the loose fresh-fallen snow of winter, before it has been melted and made compact, is piled up by the whirlwinds which are common in the Alps; such avalanches increase as they descend, till they acquire an enormous size, covering acres, I may say miles, in their descent; overwhelming and laying prostrate whole forests of pines or villages which lie in their course. Another kind, the Grund-laminen, fall chiefly during the early months of spring and summer, as in May and June, when the rays of the sun being very powerful, the snow becomes more

compact. They are composed of soggy snow and ice, and are also very destructive. They were avalanches of this kind, that in 1720, in Ober Gestelen, (Vallais,) and in 1749 in the Tavetsch, produced such devastation. The records of the valleys of the Alps abound with mournful exemplification of the destructive power of these avalanches, and of many others of this class. The wind of the avalanche, whose violent effects have been described by writers, probably acts only by its vibratory power, and the concussion consequent upon the movement of the avalanche, thus filling up the momentary vacuum produced by its rapid motion through the air. This idea of the wind of avalanches is common among the inhabitants of the Alps. In support of their opinions of the wind of avalanches, they cite the fact of large and sturdy pines being cut smoothly off, without the bark or branches being chafed, but I saw nothing of this kind, which could not be accounted for by the rush of wind to fill the vacuum. It was in this way that the village of Ronda in the Visp-Thol, had many of its houses prostrated and scattered in fragments in 1720, and also one of the spires of the convent of Dissentis fell by the vibratory action of the air, produced by an avalanche which fell about one-fourth of a mile distant from it. This concussion of the air is familiar to all by the effects produced in the discharge of ordnance near our dwellings. It may be more perfectly exemplified, by taking a bottle and corking it tightly, and discharging at a short distance, twenty or thirty feet, a musket or a rifle, so that the ball shall pass about one inch over the cork; the velocity of the projected bullet produces a vacuum, and the cork leaps from its place of confinement, in consequence of the atmospheric pressure being thus suddenly removed, and by the expansion of the air within the bottle. The Grandes Mulets are two rocks which project from the Glacier des Bossons, whose summits are so pointed, and their sides so perpendicular, that the snow does not rest upon them. Here we halted for the night. They had loaded a cannon in the valley previous to our departure, and were to discharge it when they saw us (through their telescope) arrive at this point, (Grandes Mulets,) which they did, but neither myself nor the guides heard the report, although some of our guides said they saw the smoke. I had taken up with me six old pigeons, the strongest and shyest I could find in the pigeon-house of the hotel, and now determined to let two of them off from the rock; the time being marked on a small piece of parchment, and attached by a string to one leg. I had desired the landlord to note the time when the pigeons made their appearance at Chamonix. I then tossed one of them a few feet in the air, that he might see to take his direction, when to my surprise, he fluttered a little, and came down nearly as rapidly as I had thrown him up. When we then attempted to catch him, he endeavoured to fly, but being unable to rise, he fluttered about, ran with his wings extended a few yards, and was easily taken. I presumed he might have been injured by the confinement in the basket, and so I made the same experiment with three others, the result being the same: proving that the rarity of the air was too great to admit of their supporting themselves. But the next day in descending, we let them off about half way down between the Grandes Mulets and the upper point of vegetation, and they took their courses directly for Chamonix, and were doubtless safely at home long before we reached the perpetual snow line.

After resting here twenty minutes, and previous to eating, the average pulsations and respirations of the whole party stood at one hundred and twenty-eight of the former and thirty of the latter per minute. Notwithstanding the increase in the frequency of the respiratory action was much greater than natural, and increases as you ascend to the higher points of the mountain, I found none of those urgent symptoms, mentioned by tourists, of difficult and laborious respiration, that is, during rest or repose; but even at this point, I found that the muscles became rapidly fatigued, and while in motion the respiration was accelerated, and consequently more or less difficult, but ceased to be oppressive after a few moments of rest, proving that the effect was due not to the rarity of the air, but the exercise in this rare atmosphere. The higher you ascend, the greater and greater is the inclination to rest and lassitude, and the power of

muscular endurance is diminished almost to zero. The moment, however, you place yourself in the horizontal position, by lying on the snow, the muscles being at rest, you feel merely lassitude, but no fatigue, which returns almost immediately, on the muscles being again called into action. The most troublesome and annoying circumstance was the intense thirst, produced in part by the cutaneous transpiration, which was very abundant, in consequence of the fatigue produced by motion, and also by the peculiar condition of the atmosphere. As this thirst increases, the desire for food diminishes, until it becomes actually a loathing. This was experienced not only by myself, but to a great degree even by the guides, who at the Grandes Mulets devoured the fattest kind of roasted and boiled meats with the greatest *goût*, but at the Grand Plateau cared for nothing more than the wing of a chicken, refusing positively the hearty meats, but swallowed with infinite satisfaction the Bordeaux wine which I had carried for my own use. The only beverage that had an agreeable taste to me, and which alleviated my thirst, was the *lemonade gazeuse*. Taking a small quantity of snow in my hand, I would saturate it with this liquid, and then allow it to dissolve in my mouth.

My two friends and myself chose the highest point of the Grandes Mulets as our resting place for the night; but owing to its steepness, fearing lest we might, during sound sleep subsequent to the fatigue of the day, roll, or slide down its side, we constructed, with the loose stones from the crevasses of the rock, a wall about ten feet long, and about two feet high in the centre, and descending to one foot at its extremities, of a semilunar form, against which we were to place our feet. The larger stones were now removed, to make the foundations of our beds as smooth as the circumstances of the place would permit; we selected each one his place, and spread upon it his sheepskin, while a knapsack served the purpose of a pillow. I had just wrapped my blanket around me, as the sun was sinking below the horizon, throwing its lurid glare upon the snow-capped summits, which now above, below, and on either side, rose in close proximity, presenting a scene in which were mingled the beautiful and sublime, and more than repaying any lover of nature for the fatigues endured in obtaining the sight. I now prepared for sleep, but the novelty of the position, the deathlike stillness, and the events of the day crowding before my imagination, precluded sleep; while the vast expanse of the blue arch of heaven, which was my canopy, studded with its myriads of scintillating lights, invited contemplation rather than repose.

I was not allowed long to enjoy this scene of tranquillity and silence, for the day had been one of excessive heat, and its effects began to be manifested by the fall of avalanches. Situated as the Grandes Mulets are, about ten thousand feet above the level of the sea, below the Grand Plateau, at two-thirds of the height of Mont Blanc, within two thousand five hundred feet of the summit of the Aiguille de Midi, and projecting from the middle of the glacier, they stand as opponents to very many of the avalanches that fall from either of these elevated points. I had not lain more than twenty minutes, when I was aroused by a tremendous crash, while the entire rock still vibrated from the concussion of the ponderous mass: as I sprang to my feet, and looked over the mountain side, by the light of the moon, which had just risen, making every object, though enlarged and softened, almost as distinct as noonday, this mass of snow and ice could be seen hurrying and rushing headlong in its course, till ground and broken by its own violence, it settled down still and tranquil, thousands of feet below, amid the ever moving glacier. They continued to fall for about one hour; at first the interval between was some ten minutes, then more frequently, till becoming less frequent, they ceased altogether, and universal stillness reigned once more, broken only now and then by what is termed the groanings of the Alps, which is the cracking of the ice among the glaciers.

The fall of the avalanches at this hour is caused by the effect of the sun (melting the ice), and at this high point it requires the whole force of the sun's rays during the entire day; the water thus produced runs down and forms pools about their base, which continues to melt there for some time after the sun has set, when one avalanche after another is dislodged, and beginning to fall, they continue till the water

again congeals, which prevents any further descent until the following evening, when the same effect being again produced during the day by the same cause, their fall is again renewed. I once more prepared myself for sleep, but feeling no inclination that way, I amused myself in watching the constellations, which being immediately over me, were shining with peculiar brightness, and during the course of an hour or more that I was thus engaged, I observed slight flashes of light passing before my eyes, not unlike aurora borealis; and supposed it an optical illusion, probably caused by the glare from the sun and snow to which my eyes had been exposed during the day; but as they became more frequent, I satisfied myself that they were real. Rising and looking down in the direction of Chamonix, I discovered at once the cause, which was a thunder shower in the valley. The *sillons* [streaks] of electricity presented a beautiful sight, as they sported amid the dense clouds that overhung the village. There was none of that dazzling brightness presented by the lightning seen when below the cloud, but merely the red zigzag or forked lines, owing doubtless to the cloud being between us and the electric fluid. Although the lightning could be distinctly seen, we could not detect the slightest sound of thunder; whether this was caused by any peculiar condition of the atmosphere at the time, or by the rareness of the air, or our distance, or whether it is a constant phenomenon here, I am unable to say. There was, however, much thunder in the valley, and some very heavy explosions too, I was informed by the landlord, on my return the next day.

We left the Grandes Mulets between 2 and 3 o'clock A.M., and arrived at the Grand Plateau between 8 and 9 o'clock. The view from this elevated point is almost boundless, and the whole extent of country for miles on every side (except that portion where the prospect is interrupted by the summit of Mont Blanc) extended itself far and wide, presenting its plains, mountains and lakes, as distinctly as if spread out upon a map before the eye. The Plateau is an almost level plain, with an area, I should judge, of ten acres. The Roches Rouges are between this point and the summit. The clouds began very soon to rise from different points, and often obstructed view after view, so that to continue the ascent to the very summit, we deemed would be useless, as far as the prospect was concerned. This was now nearly or completely limited by the moving masses of cloud and vapour, as they rose from the valleys or hung pendulous on the mountain side; for a moment they were stationary, and then rising in undulating broken lines, they assumed a deeper and denser form, as expanding and spreading themselves through and beyond the various mountain passes, they extended as far as the eye could discern. * *

We now hastened our descent, which was quickly and easily achieved in comparison with the toil of the ascent; as, in a few minutes, we slid down the snowy plains, which had taken hours of indefatigable effort to surmount.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

East Coast of China.

Ning-po-foo is a large town, situated on the main land, nearly west from the Chusan group of islands, on the east coast of China. It stands at the junction of two fine streams about twelve miles from the sea, which by their union form a noble river capable of being navigated by the larger vessels and junks. One of these branches runs from the west, and the other from the south, meeting at Ning-Po; and over the latter the Chinese have constructed a bridge of boats for the traffic with the suburbs on the opposite shore. The city itself is strongly fortified with high walls and ramparts about five miles round, and the space inside the walls is almost entirely filled with houses, in most parts very densely. There are two or three very fine streets; indeed, finer and wider than any I have seen in those Chinese towns which I have already visited. A good view of the city and the surrounding country, as far as the eye can reach, is obtained from the top of a pagoda about 130 feet high, having a stair-case inside by which the top can be reached. In the month of December, when I visited Ning-Po, the most striking shops in the town were those having fur and other kinds of lined dress for sale. The very poorest Chinese has always a warm

jacket or cloak lined with fur or wool for the winter, and they cannot imagine how the Europeans can exist with the thin clothes which they generally wear. When the weather was cold, I used always to wear a stout warm great coat above my other dress, and yet the Chinese were continually feeling the thickness of my clothes, and telling me that I must be cold. The reason of their wearing such warm clothing seems to be owing to their dispensing with the use of fires in their rooms, and these rooms are generally very open and cold; indeed, they do not seem to have our ideas of comfort at all in this respect. There are some very extensive silk warehouses in the town back from the main street, and something like our old established houses at home, having but little external show to attract notice.

The Chinese estimate their celebrated jade stone very highly, and here are numerous shops both for cutting it and for exposing it for sale, carved into all those curious and fantastic forms for which this people are so well known. The process of cotton printing in its most simple and original form, may be seen in most of the streets here as well as at Shanghai. Rope-making is also carried on rather extensively, and some very strong ropes and cables for the junks are made from the bracts of a species of palm very common in this part of the country. The bark of the hemp plant, too, produces very strong fibre, which is used for the same purpose.

The Chinese, as a nation, are great gamblers; even the very poorest of them cannot resist temptation; and in one of the principal streets of Ning-Po, it is quite amusing to see after nightfall the numerous stalls of oranges, sweetmeats and other trifling curiosities, at each of which there is a wheel of fortune or dice of some kind, surrounded by the Chinese in great numbers, trying their luck with a few copper cash, and evincing by their looks and language the most intense interest in the stopping of the wheel or the throwing of the dice.

Some of the temples in the town are very fine, and crowded with images of gods, to which the poor deluded natives bow the knee, burn incense, and engage in other exercises of devotion. The stranger meets with these temples or joss-houses (as they are commonly called) in all the streets, at the gates of the city, and even on the walls, and cannot but admire the devotional spirit of many of the inhabitants, only wishing that it was directed to a higher and purer source. I think I remarked before, that many of their religious ceremonies have a great resemblance to those of the Roman Catholic church, and I remember being much struck on a Sunday afternoon, when passing out by one of the gates of Ning-Po, by hearing the sounds of praise not unlike those of the Christian churches of other lands; but, when walking into the place from whence the sounds came, I found, to my disappointment, that it was only one of the numerous temples with which the city abounds, and that the sounds of praise which fell upon my ears, were only addressed to the gods of the heathen.

Ning-Po is built in the centre of a level plain, of at least thirty miles across, surrounded on all sides by a circle of hills, but opening on the east to the sea, where the town of Changhai stands, and forms, as it were, the sea-port town of Ning-Po. The view from the hills is very fine—the broad extensive plain forming, as it were, a vast amphitheatre, traversed by beautiful winding rivers, and connected by canals in all directions; thus enabling the natives to convey the produce of their country and its merchandise to Ning-Po, and from thence to Hang-cho-fu, and any other part of the world. Rice is the staple production of this part of the country, as cotton is that of the country round Shanghai, and on the banks of the Yang-tse-Kiang. The graves of the dead are scattered all over the plain, and give the stranger a good idea of the immense population of the country.

In travelling from Ning-Po to the hills, I could not account for the vast number of tombs which I met with on my way, but when I reached the summit of the hills, and looked down upon the wide-spreading plain, covered with towns and villages in all directions, densely peopled with human beings, it was very easily accounted for. Here, as at Chusan and Shanghai, the traveller is continually coming upon coffins placed on the surface of the ground, and in many instances decaying, and exposing the skeleton remains of the dead. I was much struck by frequently

meeting with large numbers of coffins piled one above another, in heaps of from thirty to forty, chiefly those of young children. I was told that they are burnt periodically, but from their appearance many of them must have remained in the same place for years, and their tenants must long ago have mouldered into dust.

In sailing up the river towards Ning-Po, I observed a great number of thatched houses, and desiring my Chinese servant to inquire the use of them, he came back and told me with all the gravity in the world, that they were places to keep Chinese soldiers in during the winter. As I could not conceive this to be true, I went and asked the boatmen myself, and found that the buildings in question were ice-houses, for which commodity there is a great demand during the summer months. This will give a good idea of the nature of the Chinese language, and show that it differs so much in different provinces, that a native of Canton and another in the north cannot understand each other. This is so much the case, that my Macao servant is almost entirely useless to me in the north, in so far as the language is concerned.

Immense quantities of fish are daily caught in the river above the town, and their mode of catching them is ingenious and amusing. One day I was going up for a considerable distance in a boat, and set out a little before low water to have the full benefit of the flow of the tide, and get as far up as possible before it turned. On the side of the river, a few miles above Ning-Po, I observed some hundreds of small boats anchored, and each containing two or three men, and the tide just turning as I passed, the whole fleet were instantly in motion rowing and sculling up the river with the greatest rapidity. As soon as they reached a favourable part of the stream, they cast out their nets and began to make a loud noise, splashing with their oars and sculls, with the intention, I suppose, of driving the fish into the nets. After remaining in this spot for about a quarter of an hour, the whole body set off again, farther up, for the next station, when they commenced again in the same noisy manner, and so on, for a long way up the river, as long as the tide was flowing; they then returned with the ebb, loaded with fishes for the next morning's market.

As a place of trade, Ning-Po has many advantages—it is itself a large town, in the midst of a populous country, and has excellent water communication with all parts of the empire, and doubtless will ultimately carry on an extensive trade with Europe and America. Comparing it, however, with our more northerly port of Shanghai, as most of the merchants are now doing, I am inclined to believe the latter will be the place of the greatest trade. I have travelled over all the country adjacent to both places, and have, of course, had a good opportunity of seeing the trade at present carried on, by means of canals and rivers, with which both districts abound. Shanghai has certainly the advantage in this respect—the number of junks moored off the town is at least twice that of Ning-Po; the canals and rivers teem with boats bustling to and from the towns in the northern parts of the empire. Then it is nearer the capital, by which it is connected by the Grand Canal; the large towns of Sou-chou-foo and Nankin are within a few miles, and an immense trade is carried on with the northern provinces of Shantung and Pechelée, besides a considerable trade with Japan. Taking all these things into consideration, it seems almost certain that Shanghai will ultimately become our greatest port of trade in the north, although Ning-Po will always command a considerable portion. All this, however, is at present only conjecture, and must depend in a great measure upon the internal arrangement regarding transit duties and other expenses, which it is impossible at present to foresee. R. F.

OUR WEEKLY GOSSIP.

The Committee for erecting the Monument to the memory of Mr. Southey, have altered their original plan. Instead of a Tablet with a Medallion, they now propose a Shrine, with a recumbent figure of the poet upon it, from a design by Mr. P. G. Lough, of which a lithographed copy will be sent to each subscriber; among whom are already to be found the late Earl of Lonsdale, Lord Kenyon, Lord Ashley, Lord Mahon, the Earl of Leven, Viscount Melville, the Bishop of London, the Bishop of Gloucester, the

Bishop of Carlisle, Mr. Justice Coleridge, Mr. Justice Patteson, Mr. W. Wordsworth, Poet Laureate, Mr. S. Rogers, the late Mr. T. Campbell, Professor Sedgwick, &c.

The case of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly has at length reached the precincts of Parliament. Mr. B. Cochrane inquired last Tuesday of Sir R. Peel, whether Government had received communications from Dr. Wolff; and the right honourable baronet consented to state all that was known to Government respecting it, on an early occasion.

One of the most attractive minor exhibitions of the season consists of a new series of water-colour drawings by Mr. Haghe, shown previous to their publication by Messrs. Greaves, of Pall Mall: the subjects principally architectural, and taken in Belgium and Germany. The affluence of the former country in churches has still to be unfolded to our highway travellers; and we should feel indebted to Mr. Haghe for opening to us by-paths of interest, were even the manner of introduction uncouth or over-formal. So far from this, however, we think these drawings excel the more highly-finished works which their artist has on other occasions exhibited. They have ease and spirit without any compromise of truth, or recurrence to those tricks by which an effect is produced at the expense of the care and self-respect of the artist.

We learn from the papers that the exhibition of works in fresco, models, &c., sent in, pursuant to notices issued by Her Majesty's Commissioners of Fine Arts, will be thrown open to the public on Monday next, at Westminster Hall.

The sale of the first division of the late Duke of Sussex's library, comprising His Royal Highness's extraordinary collection of Bibles and theological works, will begin on Monday next, and occupy twenty-four days, the first ten of which are devoted almost exclusively to the Bibles. The catalogue of this portion of the library has been issued, and forms an octavo volume of nearly 300 pages, including 5,551 lots. The entire library is divided, for sale, into three parts, the second of which will embrace the collection of manuscripts, and the third the historical books and works on general literature.

There has been during the week such a dearth of subjects of domestic interest, that we must now travel abroad in search of foreign "metal" that shall be "more attractive." Fortunately, our French neighbours have, in this respect, wealth, which may serve on the present occasion to redeem our poverty. With the language, they have also the topics of conversation. For instance: a very grave misunderstanding has arisen between the Bar of France and the judicial Bench, in which the former body has, unhappily, deemed itself called upon to take an attitude which recalls some famous passages in its ancient history, and its assumption and maintenance of which, in times of less free and settled institutions, were unquestionably amongst the safeguards of the national liberties. Both in that country and in this, the Bar has furnished proofs of its being a highly susceptible body; and so many great and valuable consequences arise out of that sensitiveness, that we feel little inclined to wish it diminished. The important thing is, that the body itself should guard against a decline of the public sympathy, consequent upon an exaggerated display of its sensibilities, or a display on wrong occasions; and this it has not always been careful to do. It would be a mistake if the French Bar, for instance, should fancy that there is the same epic dignity in its movements in the present instance, where no great principle is at issue, as on those historical occasions in which they battled for important rights, or defended themselves against dangerous encroachments. As we can understand this matter, it scarcely rises beyond an affair of temper, and one which might readily be settled without a sacrifice of dignity anywhere, to the great gain of the public. It appears that some hasty observations made by the Chief President, Séguier, at the sitting of his Court, have been interpreted by the Council of the Order of Advocates as containing an offence to the Order; whereupon they came to a decision that the body should refuse to plead before the first Chamber of the Cour Royale, where that judge presides, till the Bar should have received satisfaction. It seems to have been expected that this would have been easily arranged: the letter announcing to

the Court this decision was withheld for the moment, and the advocates came into court on the next morning anticipating that a word of explanation from the President would have satisfied their wounded honour, and terminated the affair. Unluckily, however, the matter had been noised abroad, and the gossips of Paris, too, came in great numbers to witness the judge's retraction. Whatever may have been intended it is probable that the first president would not feel himself justified in committing the dignity of the Bench before such an audience. No explanation took place, and the letter, signed by all the members of the Council, with the *bâtonnier* at their head, was sent in. From this moment arrangement became difficult. The advocates spread themselves among the crowd in the body of the court, in plain dresses; the causes were called on in their order, and no one appeared to plead, the suitor, between these two dignified benches, going to the ground. The Court having risen, proceeded, at a later period of the day, to join itself in solemn audience with the second Chamber, where, up to that time, the ordinary business had been proceeding without interruption; but from the moment of the Court's uniting, not an advocate appeared at the bar. The consequence is, that the signers of the letter have been summoned to appear before the united Chambers on the 1st of July, to answer for the offence, and the law-business of the country is suspended by the struggle of these two powerful bodies, now fairly begun. The result of the "falling-out," in this particular case, is not—as in the differences of certain persons proverbially commemorated—that "honest men come by their own,"—for the present, at least.

There is, just now, in Paris, a congress of delegates, from different European states, to the number of twenty-two, severally commissioned to examine into the proceedings of the great Trade Exhibition there going on, and the various productions exhibited—and meeting and consulting with one another at the house of one of their colleagues, the Belgian commissioner. It would be difficult to over-estimate the importance of such an assembling for such a purpose—the awakened and spreading intelligence which it indicates, or the spirit of justified pride and generous emulation, in which the whole affair of this exhibition has been planned and conducted. The entire proceedings are well worthy of notice, as significant of a new era. If there has been in them something of that display so dear to the French heart, it has, at least, been for an object so sound, and as to bear almost any amount of decoration without losing its character of solidity; and if the nation be a lover of shows, it is well they should be provided for it in connexion with such substances. The people have been made the heroes of a long festival in their own metropolis, the grand materials of whose pageantry was furnished by their own various skill and honest toil; and honours and rewards have been freely given, by the hand that distributes military crosses and political ribbons, in acknowledgment of past mechanic merit, and incitement to future. The trades' festival given by the King at Versailles, too well deserves another word of notice. The ambassadors of foreign powers were invited to be present; and this mode of presenting to Europe the spectacle of a nation's vast resources, true wealth, and substantial power is so new, as to look almost like a discovery of this clever king. It is the discovery of a grand truth, however; and we know not if the substantive greatness of a kingdom was ever so successfully brought under the eyes of foreigners before. In what other aspect could the nation's power—which is its knowledge, and its skill, and its strength—so visibly present itself as in this assembled representation of all its producing classes? This is the first time in history, that the people were ever the guest of kings, in virtue of their own inherent, positive, and recognized greatness; and we scarcely remember any expression of the change which has passed over the world since the days of Louis XV., and his scented courtiers and courtisans, which has struck us so strangely, as this picture of humble mechanics wandering as the honoured *convives* of a crowned Bourbon through the gilded saloons of Versailles, and artisans in fustian jostling the nobles of France on the benches of its famous theatre. Why, the very ghosts of the past must be dead—or some *petit marquis* would have surely risen up to avenge this last incre-

dible desecration! But the age of the *petits marquis* is gone, to join the age of Chivalry; and the *petits marquis* themselves would be more of shadows in this living and stirring world, than they even are in the dim vaults to which they have all crept—and only just in time.

The Paris papers announce the death, after a long illness, of a well-known member of the Academy of Sciences in its anatomical and zoological section, M. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire. M. Saint-Hilaire was professor of geology at the Museum of Natural History.

The dramatic reports of our neighbours have once more the name of Mlle. Rachel in their first place. The receipts for the ten performances in which she has taken part since her re-appearance, are stated to amount to near 60,000 francs—the largest amount ever taken in the same time at the *Comédie Française*. Mlle. Rachel goes to Belgium, to fulfil a professional engagement, next month.

The work of monumental restoration proceeds in France, as everywhere else throughout Europe, and is likely at length, to reach her great Metropolitan monument, Notre Dame, where it is so much needed. At Pau, too, the works on the château of Henri IV. are proceeding rapidly to a conclusion. More than a hundred workmen are employed on its restoration; and the old monument is arising in its ancient splendour, enhanced by its modern interest. With this spirit, which repairs the monumental past, the spirit of monumental commemoration which honours the present age, and completes the wanting links in the chain of illustration that connects the two, is proceeding hand in hand. The associated musicians of the Capital have already set on foot a subscription for a monument to the composer Berton, to be erected in Père-Lachaise. We may add, that a grand musical festival, on an extraordinary scale, for the benefit of the composer's widow, is in preparation, to be held in the Hall of the *Conservatoire*—the directors who have undertaken its organization being MM. Auber, Spontini, Halévy, Onslow, Carafa, Habeneck, and Antoine de Kontsky. In aid of the subscription for the monument to Casimir Delavigne, a life of the poet has just been published by M. Morlent, of Havre. The statue of Duquesne, which for the last two months has been exhibited in the court of the Louvre, has departed for its destination, Dieppe, and its place is taken by the finished statue of the naval hero, Jean Bart, executed for Dunkirk.

The musical art in Italy has sustained a loss, by the death of the Abbé Baini, Director of the Pontifical Chapel and Library—at once an eminent writer and composer, in his sixty-eighth year. In church music, particularly, the Abbé had made himself a reputation, having written, amongst other things, a *Miserere* for the Sistine Chapel, which is said to sustain advantageous comparison with the famous *Miserere* of Allegri and Bai. He has written much and profoundly on music. Among his productions of this class, may be mentioned his 'Essay on the Identity of Musical and Poetical Rhythm,' and his 'Historical and Critical Memoirs of the Life and Works of Palestrina,' a book which is described as embracing the whole history of Italian music in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Much of his time was devoted to bringing into order the books and compositions in the Pontifical chapel.

The King of Prussia has presented his Order of Merit to the Italian poet, Manzoni, and the Danish, Oehlenschläger. We were so accustomed, soon after his accession to the throne, to refer with hopeful satisfaction, to the liberal tendencies of this Prince, and the prospect of free institutions, which, under his inspiration, seemed to dawn upon the German people, that it is with more than ordinary regret we have recorded those latter evidences which seem to proclaim, indefinitely, their postponement. It now appears that a high court of censorship was recently created at Berlin, to decide, in the last resort, on appeals from the decrees of the ordinary censors; and that certain professors of the Universities of Berlin and Bonn, having appealed to this supreme judicature in behalf of manuscripts rejected by the censors, had the decisions below confirmed against them. So far, all is logical at least—agreeable to principle. But the same professors have since been cited before the tribunal of the University, and condemned to penalties for the opinions maintained in those very

writings which they had submitted to the censorship! To punish a man for his unpublished writings is simply as absurd as it would be to punish him for his unexpressed thoughts, with the only difference of its being more possible. But its supreme intolerance is not the only objection to such a proceeding. It stultifies the very institution itself of a censorship. The censorship is the court assigned for the trial of the orthodox, political, religious, or scientific, of manuscript opinion; and the prescribed punishment is suppression of the heterodox. These are supposed, under its most intolerant idea, to write what they please, with the understanding that they have this ordeal to pass before they can publish. One of our French contemporaries well observes, that the Prussians, if these things may happen, are to have all the inconveniences of a censorship, without its sole resulting advantage—that of relieving the writer from the responsibility of his writings.

An act of great munificence in the cause of humanity, performed by a noble Pole, of Odessa, the Baron de Grzymala Eulewitz, is worthy of record. Touched by the sufferings of the Jews on the western frontier of Russia, under the ukase which expels them from their homes (one of those imperial measures which the Czar redeems in snuff-boxes), has set out in that direction, with the view of selecting a hundred poor Jew families of the working class, and taking them with him into the province of Kherson—where he has prepared houses for their reception, and will present them with the tools proper to their occupations, and supply their immediate wants.

A curious ordinance has issued from the Ministry of the Interior at Madrid, having for its object to restore the orthography of the language to a system of uniformity. For some time past it is complained, that every teacher and professor has modified the spelling at his own caprice—an abuse threatening to exercise a fatal influence on the language, and create confusion and uncertainty in the interpretation of important documents. Accordingly, it is decreed, that without interfering with the right of every author in his works, to spell as he sees fit, all elementary professors shall teach in conformity with the system of orthography adopted by the Royal Spanish Academy, on pain of losing their diploma; and that in all future examinations Orthography shall be the object of a very strict scrutiny.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS, TRAFALGAR SQUARE.
THE EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY IS NOW OPEN.
Admission, (from Eight o'clock till Seven) 1s.; Catalogue 1s.
HENRY HOWARD, R.A. Sec.

BRITISH INSTITUTION, PALL MALL.
The Gallery, with a SELECTION OF PICTURES BY ANCIENT MASTERS, and Deceased BRITISH ARTISTS, is OPEN DAILY, from Ten in the Morning till Six in the Evening.—Admission, 1s.; Catalogue, 1s.

WILLIAM BARNARD, Keeper.

THE TENTH ANNUAL EXHIBITION OF THE NEW SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER COLOURS IS NOW OPEN at their Gallery, FIFTY-THREE, PALL MALL, next the British Institution, from 9 o'clock till Dark. Admission 1s.; Catalogue 6d.

JAMES FAHEY, Secretary.

GREAT ATTRACTION.—DIORAMA, REGENT'S PARK, NOW OPEN, with a NEW EXHIBITION, representing the Interior of the Abbey Church of St. Ouen, at Rouen; and an Exterior View of the Cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris. Both Pictures are painted by M. Renoux, and exhibit various novel effects of light and shade.—Open from Ten till Six.

MIDSUMMER HOLIDAYS.

ROYAL POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTION.—LONGBOTTOM'S PHYSIOSCOPE exhibits the human face, with its varied expressions, on a gigantic scale, curiously contrasted with the living man. The OPAQUE MICROSCOPE magnifies effectively a succession of WORKS OF THE FINE ARTS; also casts of ANCIENT INSCRIPTIONS taken by Miss Wilson from the WALLS OF THE TOWER OF LONDON, cut by Lord Gifford Dudley and other State Prisoners. Arrangements have been made for Dr. RYAN to deliver VARIOUS LECTURES on the EVENINGS OF MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, and FRIDAYS; and Professor BACHOFFNER on the alternate Evenings. These Lectures on Popular Subjects, as well as the Morning Lectures, will abound in interesting experiments. ARMSTRONG'S HYDRO-ELECTRIC MACHINE. DIVING BELL and DIVER. NEW DISOLVING VIEWS, &c. &c. The Music is conducted by T. Wallis, Mus. Doc.—Admission, 1s.; Schools, Half-price.

SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY

GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.—June 24.—R. I. Murchison, Esq., President, in the chair. The Duke of St. Albans, E. Hencke, Esq., Col. Dickenson, late President of the Bombay Geographical Society, C. Standish, Esq., M.P., and S. Jones Lloyd, Esq., were elected Fellows. Just as the reading of papers was about to commence, the meeting was agreeably surprised by the appearance of M. Schomburgk. The President then read the note of a Russian

operation, for determining the actual depression of the Caspian Sea below the level of the Mediterranean—which operation had been reduced by the eminent astronomer, M. Struve, now in England, and communicated by that gentleman to him. A few years ago, it was generally believed that the waters of the Caspian Sea were at least 300 feet below the level of those of the Black Sea and Mediterranean. This view was adopted in consequence of a series of barometrical observations. But, it having been found that from the great number of stations across the land separating the Caspian from the Sea of Azoff, small errors had become greatly magnified, a new survey was made. Three able mathematicians, Messrs. Fuss, Savitch, and Sabler were, therefore, employed to make independent trigonometrical levellings, and their observations agreeing to within a foot or two, give, for the mean result, 83.6 English feet as the depression, the possible error being limited to 1.3 foot, which definitively settles this long-pending geographical question.

The principal paper was the personal narrative of M. Middendorf's exploration in Northern Siberia, drawn up by M. Baer, of the Russian Imperial Academy of Sciences. The expedition left Taroukousk on the 23rd of March, 1843, and proceeded down the frozen Jenissei on sledges drawn first by dogs and then by rein-deer. From thence, crossing the Toundra or frozen Marshes, they reached the basin of the Khatunga. Here they found few resources, and all the party, with the exception of M. Middendorf and his companion, M. Brandth, were attacked with a kind of measles, and disabled from working. The natives were also attacked with the same malady, and could afford no assistance. M. Middendorf here left M. Brandth, to commence his meteorological observations, and proceeded himself to reconnoitre the Khatunga; on his return from which, finding his people recovered, they constructed the skeleton of a boat; which done, a part of the people were left with M. Brandth, while M. Middendorf, with the rest, and the skeleton of the boat, started towards the Taimyr River, on the 7th of May, having eight sledges, drawn by sixty-eight rein-deer, and accompanied by some Samoyedes. The difficulties experienced on the way down to the sea, in consequence of the nature of the country and climate—the cold, the want of provisions, and the sickness of the natives, have few parallels in the annals of travels, and were such as nothing less than the zeal and energy of the leader of the expedition could have overcome. Great, however, as were the obstacles he met with in his descent of the river, and his passage of Lake Taimyr, they were slight compared with what were experienced on the return of the party. The short summer was already past, and in returning through the lake, the boat was caught by the ice, and stove in. With its debris a sledge was constructed; but such was the nature of the ground they had to drag it over, that it almost immediately fell to pieces. On the 30th of August, M. Middendorf, worn out with fatigue and anxiety, was too ill to proceed. Pressed by hunger, they were compelled to kill their faithful hunting dog, that had been so useful to the expedition: his blood was not disdained, and his flesh was divided into five portions; and thus provided, M. Middendorf ordered his four companions to go in search of the Samoyedes, and if possible bring him relief. Alone and ill, M. Middendorf remained without shelter at the approach of an arctic winter, under the 75th parallel, for eighteen days; during the last three of which the storm covered him with snow, and thus saved his life. At one time, he feared his companions must have perished, and that his own dreadful situation would deprive him of reason. Self-preservation, however, roused him, and with a little melted snow, mixed with some spirit of wine in which an object of natural history was preserved, and a partridge he accidentally caught, he was somewhat restored. He then made a little sledge to drag after him, and converting a portion of his pelisse into boots, started, and soon after was providentially seen by one of his party coming for him with two Samoyedes. On the 8th of October, he was again with M. Brandth, on the banks of the Boganida.

This being the last meeting of the season, the President, in making the announcement, congratulated the Society upon its condition and future prospects. He adverted to the increase of members within the last year, and to their high standing, as a proof of

the estimation in which the labours of the Society were viewed by those most competent to appreciate them. The Society, he was sure, would, also, be sensible of the advantage of now reckoning among their Vice Presidents those two great northern travellers, Sir John Franklin and Sir George Back.

INSTITUTION OF CIVIL ENGINEERS.—June 25.—The President in the chair. A paper was read descriptive of the removal of the lighthouse on the North Pier at Sunderland, by Mr. J. Murray. The lighthouse, built in 1802, was 76 feet in height, and 15 feet in diameter at the base, slightly tapering upwards to the lantern. It was built of polished stone, and had within it a spiral staircase; its total weight was 338 tons, which being concentrated on an area of only 162 square feet, rendered the task of its removal in an entire mass a work of much difficulty and danger, especially when its height was considered. Mr. Murray was induced to propose its removal without taking it down, in consequence of the expense which would have been incurred in the establishment of a temporary light on the pier, the cost of building another lighthouse, and the success with which dwelling houses had been moved entire in the United States. The decision was accelerated by a serious breach being made by the sea on the wall of the pier on which it stood, and in consequence the work of removal was commenced on the 15th of June, 1841, by the masons cutting the holes for inserting the timbers for forming the cradle; those directly beneath the building were carried by 144 cast iron rollers, travelling on eight lines of iron rails, and the outer timbers supporting the braces and struts, were placed upon slide barks, which were lubricated with a mixture of soft soap and black lead to diminish the friction. The power applied was by means of several drawing and pushing screws, and by three winches, with ropes and tackle blocks, worked by eighteen men. On the 2nd of August, the mass was moved a distance of 28 feet 6 inches in a northerly direction, to place it in the line of the new pier. After changing the position of the rollers and slide barks to adapt them first to a curve of 647 feet radius, and then to a straight line in an easterly direction, the cradle with its load was propelled steadily forward, at an average rate of 33½ feet per hour when in motion, the entire time of moving over 447 feet being thirteen hours 24 minutes. Much time was of course, occupied in taking up and relaying the rails and barks, and in preparing a solid foundation for them as the mass advanced; so that it was not until the 4th of October that the lighthouse arrived at the extremity of the pier, where the foundation was prepared for it. The timbers were withdrawn gradually, the spaces being filled up with solid masonry, and the building was stated to have remained to the present time in a solid state, without the slightest appearance of even a crack in the walls. A light was exhibited in the lantern, as usual, every night during its transit. The entire cost of executing the work was £277, and it was shown that an actual saving of £931 had been made by adopting the plan of removal, instead of building a new lighthouse.

A paper by Prof. Hosking, containing some suggestions for the introduction of constructions to retain the sides of deep cuttings in clays and other uncertain soils, was then read. These constructions were chiefly intended to be introduced in situations where, on account of the bad nature of the soil, open cuttings or tunnels would be expensive and dangerous; they consisted of buttress walls, placed at intervals along the length of the line, and opposite to one another, strutted at their toes by an inverted arch, and above by built beams of brickwork, at given heights, discharging arches being turned from buttress to buttress to carry the beams; the buttresses were to be made the springing walls of longitudinal counterarched retaining walls, and all the force exerted against them would be converted to the buttresses, and from thence to the arches and built beams. The author then gave a detailed estimate of the expense of forming an open clay cutting with slopes at 2½ to 1, and of the proposed constructions, the same data being taken in both cases, from which it appeared that the difference was nearly one-third in favour of the construction. It was stated by Captain Vetch that a similar kind of construction had been successfully used in the Moseley cutting on the line of the Birmingham and

Gloucester Railway, and General Pasley stated that Mr. Adie had introduced that kind of construction on the Bolton and Preston Railway.

A paper, by Mr. J. Bremner, described the mode adopted by him for rebuilding the piers of Sarslet Harbour (Caithness, N.B.), after they had been twice destroyed by the sea, to whose action it is much exposed, the waves frequently breaking over the works at a height of 50 feet. The works required to be completed with great rapidity, as the season in which they could be carried on was very limited. Mr. Bremner therefore contrived several gigantic cranes, which were fixed at about 20 feet above high-water mark, the longest commanded a radius of 115 feet, and by it a cargo of 20 tons of large stones could be unloaded from a barge, and conveyed a distance of 230 feet, in half an hour; and it afforded similar facility for laying the blocks of stones in their places in the building, as also for depositing materials in front of a breach which had been made by the sea in the new works, which, without such efficient means, would have been, as before, entirely destroyed. The machinery and general mode of building adopted by Mr. Bremner were described, and some remarks as to the inefficiency of vertical pier walls for resisting the force of the waves in exposed situations appeared to attract attention.

The President addressed the meeting on the merits of a few of the papers which had been read during the session, and at the ballot Sir John Rennie, Messrs. D. Stevenson (Edinburgh), G. M. Miller, and R. B. Grantham were elected Members; and Lieut. Riddell, R.A., Messrs. H. Hensman, R. Dunkin, E. Hooper, and W. Vanderkiste, as Associates. The meeting then adjourned for the session.

ETHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—June 19.—Sir Charles Malcolm, President, in the chair. Lord Francis Egerton, M.P., J. Heywood, Esq., and W. D. Child, Esq. were elected members. A paper 'On the intellectual character of the Esquimaux,' by Dr. King, was read, being the last of a series of three papers forming a history of this Arctic family. The data, upon which Vitruvius, Lord Kames, Prichard, and Herder have displayed considerable learning and ingenious reasoning, Dr. King pronounced to be wholly incorrect. Of the general disposition of the Esquimaux, we are informed, all who have visited them speak in the most favourable terms. Their intelligence, compared with the uncivilized races generally, is described as of a high order, as evinced in their social habits among themselves and with foreigners, in the marriage ceremonies, in their funeral rites, in their arts and manufactures, and their commercial relations, and in the education of their children. The estimation in which women are held is much higher than is usual with uncivilized man, and young couples are frequently seen rubbing noses, their favourite mark of affection, with an air of tenderness. The Esquimaux are polygamists, but they rarely have more than two wives, and only one if she has issue; and the women have the same privilege as to the number of husbands. At Melville Peninsula and Regent's Inlet cousins are allowed to marry, but a man must not wed two sisters, while at Greenland marriage between cousins is rare. Two instances occurred at Igloodik of the father and son being married to sisters. A son-in-law or daughter-in-law does not consider father-in-law or mother-in-law in the light of relations. If a boy and a girl, although in no way related, have been brought up in the same family, they are looked upon as brother and sister, and are not allowed to marry. When there are no children it is considered a reproach to both parties.

OXFORD ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY.—Annual Meeting, June 17.—The Rev. the Rector of Exeter College in the chair. After a few preliminary observations, the chairman read the Annual Report of the Committee. He congratulated the Society on the steady progress of the 'Study of Gothic Architecture,' which is daily becoming more general: the good effects of this are already visible on all sides, and still greater effects may yet be looked for. He rejoiced to observe the formation and successful progress of similar Societies in various parts of the kingdom, and mentioned particularly the Cambridge and the Exeter Societies, as very flourishing and efficient. The mutilation and destruction of the remains of Gothic Architecture has been checked and well nigh stopped, although a few more instances

may still be heard of occasionally, as at Newcastle, where an ancient church has been wantonly destroyed within the last few weeks; the general indignation with which such acts are now viewed by all persons who have any pretensions to the rank of educated or enlightened men, is a guarantee that they will not be frequent. There is, however, another just ground of alarm in the mischief which is daily perpetrated under the name of Restoration, which, when conducted without sufficient knowledge is often productive of more injury than benefit, and should be very closely watched. Irreparable injury is often done by ignorant persons, under the plausible pretext of merely scraping off the whitewash, and still more when the decayed surface of the stone has also to be scraped.

A paper was read on Dorchester Church, Oxfordshire, by Henry Addington, Esq., of Lincoln College, illustrated by a large number of drawings of all parts of the building, including the original drawings by Mr. Mackenzie, for Skelton's Oxfordshire, which were kindly lent for the occasion by the Rev. H. Wellesey. Mr. A. gave an outline of the early history of Dorchester, with its bishopric, and abbey, showing clearly that there was a Saxon church on this site, but considers no part of the existing building earlier than the middle of the twelfth century, (unless it is a small portion of the masonry of the tower,) and the greater part is of the time of Edward I. The two semicircular arches which have been sometimes considered as Saxon, are evidently cut through the Norman walls, and are probably of the time of Charles II., when the Church was repaired after the injury it had sustained in the civil wars.

MEETINGS FOR THE ENSUING WEEK.

THUR. Zoological Society, 3 P.M.—General Business.
FRI. Botanical Society, 4.

FINE ARTS

BRITISH INSTITUTION.

Ancient Masters. [Concluding Notice.]

Several good portraits by Rembrandt, one of them superlative, 'A Dutch Lady,' No. 10. She has a pair of hands, it is true, that would not discredit a dairy-maid, and just such a face as might be seen under a milch-cow's flank, over a well-scoured pail; yet however coarse they be, the lustrous painting of those hands imbues them with a most delicate and aristocratic character; she seems to have washed them always in diamond rose-water, and let them touch no household article less pellucid than chinaware. A like transparent, but somewhat more brunette bloom over-spreads her unrefined features, whose brilliant expressiveness irradiates them still farther, and renders them if not beautiful, attractive. This plenitude of expression, which beams from her eyes, bursts from her lips, and breaks forth from every trait, realizes Dr. Donne's hyperbole, "one would almost say her body thought," for the animal spirits run tickling it throughout into mirthfullest manifestations. The grated flower of a garden-pot, to use the most apposite rustic image we can recollect, could not discharge what is within, from so many points as this buxom visage. No. 23, another 'Dutch Lady,' still more of a Dowsabel, less intelligent, though her eyes, set at the side of her brows, heifer-like, must embrace an extensive field of observation; the colouring richer, deeper, and the handling freer. No. 56, 'Burgomistress Six,' lady-like enough, finished work, but somewhat hard, and the arms ill-drawn, appearing *fin* from their shortness. No. 54, 'Burgomaster Six,' which has most sentiment of all these portraits, and gives a graver pleasure to behold it. No. 31, 'Portrait of a Man in Armour,' the most Rembrandtish among them, that is, most exhibiting his popular characteristic strong effects: these, like "strong waters," soonest and fiercest intoxicate (we would add, at least cost), so the multitude relishes them with, if not the purest, the highest gust. Rembrandt was a very publican, somewhat of a sinner too, when he thus turned his fountain of inspiration into a pictorial spirit-shop, and drugged up his intellectual drams to suit the palate of the amateur lower orders. Michaelangelo often mingles over-much nial alcohol, spirit above proof, but never mere vinegar—never from a wish to concoct "fire-water," such as might produce vociferous praise of it, and rather makes those ecstasies it enkindles resemble *delirium tremens* than true

enthusiasm. Besides Michael poured in largely the purifying adulteration—ether. Our remarks have a general scope; no especial reference to the Rembrandt before us, not even to ancient art, nor yet to any particular art whatever. Poets, like painters, may drug the possets they concoct for public deglutition till they poison genuine taste: dramatists and novelists may, like quacks of all professions, stimulate with *cantharides* till they destroy native impulse towards the beautiful, and degrade the finest passions of the soul into vulgar lusts. But Rembrandt's portrait: it is not without merit; the physiognomy displays a powerful, because embrittled character, the attitude a picturesque, because melodramatic effect; our artist's loaded touch makes the canvas a marl-bed of richest compass—*putre solum*, a dilettante Virgil or Columella would call it. No. 40, near it, a 'Portrait' by *Calkar*, the German pupil of Titian, has great merit also; Vasari says his works do not exhibit the least trace of his tramontane origin, and lauds him as a perfect Venetian; but he drew the heads for Giorgio's 'Lives,' and we imagine ourselves to detect a certain aridity in his colouring which scarce admits such an unqualified naturalization. The 'Stag Hunt,' No. 21, by *Hackert* and *Berghem*, though an ill-handled work, is perhaps the most potent landscape here; we mean throws the most potent spell from its bosom upon the spectator. When viewed afar its unsbright translucency suggests the land of visions and splendid phantasmas; its group of hunters are as buoyant as if they were aerial beings; approach it, all this magical appearance vanishes into spots as green and yellow as a Stilton cheese,—as flat and vapid as a chalybente pool where as many stains discolour the scum-like surface.

Two or three specimens only of the Spanish School represent it, and among them one only does it much credit—an exquisite *Murillo*. The bust of a 'Girl,' No. 101, may show what qualities should be looked for in productions ascribed to its painter, and what can be seldom found. We have said elsewhere that he never is low-minded except when he attempts high subjects: his raggedest tatterdemalions, if not *genteel*, which our sentimental illustrators of Thomson's Seasons, Cowper's Poems, &c., our Westalls and our Corboulds, make all their shoeless and shirtless bumpkins—if, unlike those of our idealizing painters, his beggar-boys have not Grecian contours, nor his village belles ball-room feet to trip over clod and furrow—neither are they vulgar. Though exhibiting appropriate plebeianism of character, the artist's own refined taste is as a veil between us and anything offensive therein. This rustic donzella might have just dressed her raven hair at a fountain, and cropped a flower from its brink to adorn her bosom,—or perhaps a mountain-rose from the bramble near it,—selected with the nice discernment taught by natural vanity, for its pale bloom corresponds to the tint of her lip, which looks like its reflection. We almost see herself imaged in the fountain—so transparent, so glassy, is the beautiful, pure tone of the picture: its whole conception and execution breathe a most delicate spirit. Would that *Murillo* had painted more 'Spanish Girls,' and fewer *Madonnas*! Nevertheless, No. 48, a 'Virgin and Child,' has some value; but how much nearer its plebeianism approaches vulgarity than the portrait of our Andalusian country lass.

English masters monopolize the third saloon: we have known one among them, alone, fill the three saloons better. *Gainsborough's* 'Peasant Children,' No. 154, appears to us the single first-rate specimen; nothing of the kind can surpass it, darkened and matted though its colours be by time, instead of harmonized and mellowed. The broad touch, the generous style throughout, remain, however, and these were enough for our gratification, if even the deeper beauties of composition and expression—a rich woodland home-scene, animated with human faces most divine, to wit, those of innocent children—did not enhance our pleasure. The Landscapes by *Gainsborough* this year are none very good—almost all very indifferent. Little else can we say of the *Wilson's*; No. 141, a 'Distant View of Rome,' gives a distant view of its painter's genius, which is but faintly visible. Even *Sir Joshua* calls upon us rather for excuses than encomiums: several of his works now exhibited seem early or imperfect attempts—some may have been mere experiments. We could pardon

with an ill grace any English painter—him with the worst—those ale-house signs, 'Lord Rochester as Bacchus,' No. 162, and 'Mrs. Hartley, the Actress,' No. 159. 'Lady Carnarvon and Bacchus,' No. 166, is unforgivable, saving it were meant to swing before the Herbert Arms, at Porchester, or blacken, instead of a Saracen's Head, by some roadside inn of 'dreary Arvon.' Such things, if ever so numerous, would not make us retract our opinion about Reynolds's great abilities; we should find it as difficult to eat our words as to swallow small swords, and they would cut us as deeply to the heart: still, we feel enthusiasm far more profound in the cause of Beautiful Art than in that of *Raffaello* or *Michaelangelo* himself. No. 156, the 'Nymph and Cupid' replaces *Sir Joshua* on his exalted pedestal: here his splendid imagination shines forth like the gorgeous effluence of the evening sun that emblazons the horizon. Its sombreness enriches its lustre, and enhances its grand effect. Reynolds's chiaroscuro has this merit, peculiar to it, at least characteristic of it beyond every other we recollect,—it is not, as *Caravaggio's* and *Guercino's*, a trickish candle-light contrast between black and white, a vulgar surprise upon our admiration, but the refined chiaroscuro of Nature herself, whose deepest shadows and darkest recesses, where vision can enter at all, have a soft tinge spreading into their utterst dimness, and though losing itself gradually is never lost. *Correggio* and *Rembrandt* adopted this principle to some degree, but the warm and transpicuous gloom which often gives *Sir Joshua's* scenes such an Elysian air, we think neither *Giorgione* nor *Titian* approached. It may be designated a *summer-chiaroscuro*, as distinct from the autumnal of the Venetians, and the hybernal of the frigid Schools; we might complete the quaternion by calling our modern fresh and varied style the vernal—let it suffice. Nos. 133 and 137, two pastoral portraits of little girls, under the names 'Sylvia' and a 'Shepherdess,' are somewhat heavy productions. No. 138, the 'Countess of Powis,' despite her pulverulent frizz and *nez retroussé*, despite her bloomless cheek flayed of its complexion by the picture-cleaners, has a charm ineffable still. No. 130, 'Henry, Earl Suffolk and Berkshire,' an ephemeral and obscure Secretary of State, the artist renders immortal if he could not make him illustrious: his portrait, in a fine subdued key of well-modulated tints, proves how little *Sir Joshua* needed florid colours to become a potent colourist. We wish his successors would, like him, oftener depend on the resources of their skill than the riches of their palette. No. 113, 'Landscape and Cattle,' by *De Louthbourg*, who never paints the worst picture any collection presents, though seldom the best either: this one does happen to be a nonpareil of its kind, among third-rate *Gainsboroughs* and *Wilson's*. No. 124, 'Cupid bound by Nymphs': pity that *Stothard* was not as spiritual a workman as he was a fanciest! With *Correggio's* exquisite pencilling, the little picture before us would have almost a *Correggesque* charm, having even now much of *Allegri's* gay imagination and amiable grace. Like imperfection without like merit characterizes No. 131, 'Jacob's Dream,' yet those seraphim had some other reality of expression while in the heaven of the painter's invention, ere they became creations of his coarse unhandiwork, which obliterated their divine lineaments. Nos. 134 and 135, 'Our Saviour at Emmaus,' by *Fuseli*, and 'Christ blessing the Little Children,' by *West*. We can conceive why both these pictures should be admitted into the Exhibition, but not why either; for of such a repulsive pair one was indispensable to keep the other in countenance. Both are ambitious abortions: that a failure from native eccentricity endeavouring after ungenial decorousness, this from imbecility aping the exalted and august: they no more entitle their limners to come among the Old Masters than solemn bombast and malapert impotence did Ancient Pistol and Forcible Feeble to rank among the heroes of Shrewsbury Plain. President West, indeed, we always looked upon as the ninth part of a painter; *Fuseli*, however, seldom manifests so complete a want of power as the platitude under view exposes. His 'Thor battering the Serpent of Medgar,' No. 150, a subject which the super-sublime Norse fable furnished him, awoke his sympathetic spirit: he depicts the Scanian Hercules and Demogorgon with a strength and venomous furor akin to their own. A couple of clever works, by

Opie: No. 151, represents 'Age and Youth,' that is, two portrait-heads together, thus baptized because they represented nothing particular; No. 167, 'A Ghost Story,' contains much good expression thrown away on a futile theme. 'John Philip Kemble as Rolla,' No. 144, the striking stage-attitude composed by the actor himself, and copied by *Lawrence*, is familiar from the common play-book frontispiece, and just fit for it; yet is far less discredit-table to *Kemble's* taste than 'Napoleon crossing the Alps,' by *David*, to *Napoleon's*, since theatrical extravagance of gesture may be better allowed in a mock hero than a *bond fide* one. *Cromwell* showed a higher mind after his homely fashion, when he commanded his stern portrait with all its warts! No. 168, the 'Countess Cawdor,' a head, does *Lawrence's* pencil due honour. Here we have court beauty, polished air, and neat finish, every curl smooth and crisp as if just turned off the hairdresser's finger, every trait fresh and brilliant as if just from the toilette-table, that delicate cheek, as it were, exhaling the fragrance of scented-soap, those delicious lips sighing forth attar of roses,—ah! what a magic production! here we behold the perfection Modern Art has attained to! Exquisite, exquisite *Sir Thomas's* most gentlemanlike, aye, and ladylike too, of portrait-painters!—Now let us look at this other head, 'Miss Rich,' No. 119, by *Hogarth*. *Hogarth*? the caricaturist! the coarse pictorial satirist! he painting anything beautiful? Vulgarian! his subjects offend a tasteful amateur to the soul—his colours even soil the very eye-sight!—Nay, but let us examine this bygone belle in her simple frill-cap and her ringlets *à la mode de Nature*. Evidently *Zephyr* himself has been her hair-dresser: a hand almost as free and as frolic as his has arranged that cap with as graceful a neglectfulness. Look at the humid lustre of those eyes, the healthful blood's warm dew upon those vermeil lips—look at that cheek, and say, ye living roses—both York and Lancastrian!—whether doth the lovelier, brighter, purer and sweeter bloom distinguish *Sir Thomas's* flower or *Hogarth's*, Countess Cawdor or *Polly Rich*? Style of art alone considered, the latter far excels; its master-like freedom is to our minds no less beyond the nice precision, than its natural elegance beyond the artificial refinement of the former. We can praise neither the workmanship nor the colour of 'Southwark Fair,' No. 140, neither its elegance nor its beauty, although the Female Drummer has an air of both: it was never well painted, and now appears little but a configuration of dabs blended into one expansive blot by the darkening tints which have since crept over it. Marvellous to see, however, the expressiveness, the individualism, the humour, the wit, the varied and concentrated character, these sallow dabs for faces manage to feature out, and the most graphic, dramatic scene of human life the whole blot sets before us!

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA

CONTEMPORARY MUSICAL COMPOSERS.

MICHAEL COSTA.

WE are glad to take the opportunity afforded by the production of 'Don Carlos,' to devote a few lines to the works of *Signor Costa*, since they illustrate a peculiar musical epoch, no less than the special studies of a clever and indefatigable man. In our worthy *maestro's* 'Malek Adhel,' in his single *arias* and romances,—delightful studies for the singer—nay, even in his ballets 'Sire Huon' and 'Alma,' it would seem as if he was aware that his vein of melody is neither fresh nor plentiful. The happiest and most haunting specimen, which proves the rule by the exception, is *Rubini's* first *cavatina*: in 'Malek' the second being wonderful but as a piece of effect calculated for a particular singer. Whether conscious or not of this meagreness of first invention, *Signor Costa* has done more to atone for it, by close study of vocal and orchestral combination, rich finish, and (as Italian times go) propriety of sound to sense, than the generality of his countrymen. In our judgment, the 'Malek' is, in most respects, a far better opera than *Mercadante's* latest works so much vaunted for their science: its music occupying a *mezzo termine* between the old executive and the new declamatory schools. This might be expected from an opera written for the last corps of consummate singers, which is likely to be collected for a lustre to come.

Though the Italians may not always extol screaming, bawling, and braying as breadth and grandeur, nor assert that a dramatic vocalist is better for not having frittered away his voice in studying *gorgheggi* and *fortituri*, or, in plain English, for having armed himself with the resources of his art, just at present the mistake seems largely accepted; and we hear its fatal fruits in the Frezzolinis and Fornasaris, who appear, surprise the world for a while, then sink into disfavour. Such being modern Italian taste, it is not wonderful that the 'Malek' did not become popular on the continent. But further; there is a general seriousness, if not solemnity, of tone about Signor Costa's music, which, for aught we know, the Southerners might ascribe to the pressure of our terrible London atmosphere upon the airy spirits of the Neapolitan. Perhaps in this very nationality (so to say) we unconsciously sympathize, and therefore admire what more mercurial audiences might repudiate.

Signor Costa is almost always happy in his church effects; as, indeed, the scholar and *protégé* of Zingarelli ought to be. The chant behind the scenes, from the monastery on Mount Carmel, lingers by us as we are writing. 'Don Carlos,' too, opens with an imposing ecclesiastical strain, which has the vagueness of outline, and the severe harmonies belonging to the good days of sacred music, before Devotion had availed itself of the dancing strains of opera and ballet. The more rhythmical chorus of the Inquisitors, in the third act of 'Don Carlos,' disappoints us; the result being bald commonplace, whereas simplicity was aimed at. On listening to it, we could not but compare it with the finer chorus of monks, in the fifth act of 'Robert,' or the magnificent Benediction of the words in 'Les Huguenots,' perhaps because, like Costa, Meyerbeer is no melodist, and the situations are analogous.

From the above remarks, the reader will be prepared for our opinion, that the airs of display in 'Don Carlos,' are its least happy portions. Too conscientious to repeat the twenty-times-told tale of sequence and passage—yet not spontaneous enough to originate a decided novelty, Sig. Costa frequently takes refuge in oddities of interval, in disappointments (for satisfactions) by modulation: in breaking off where the ear wants to go on, in proceeding where a pause seemed inevitable. As was natural, too, this peculiarity appears to be on the increase: there is much more mannerism, both as regards *cantilena* and *cabaletta*, in 'Don Carlos' than in 'Malek.' When he works voices in combination, our composer rarely fails, as the *trio* for the King, the Prince and Posa, the grand concerted piece in the second finale, and the *duettino* between the Queen and the Prince in the last scene, charmingly attest. He masters the orchestra, too, with pen, no less than with *baton*: the *veriest* common *four-in-a-bar* accompaniment to 'Smania,' or 'Desio,' is sure to receive some novelty of colour from a happy *pizzicato* or breathing of flute or bassoon artfully thrown in. The most beautiful thing in 'Don Carlos' is the instrumental introduction to the *prima donna's* last scene: contrivance here, by its felicity, amounting to genius.

To this sketchy character of one amongst our most valuable musical fellow-citizens, a word or two of special detail must be added. Having a strong feeling for dramatic situation, Sig. Costa has largely suffered in his present opera, from the palsy influence of its *libretto*. How the passion of the original story has been tamed out of it, is a puzzle. All that is left of Schiller's or Alfieri's dramas, or the more singular real history, which Florentine in part recounted from the judicial records of the Inquisition, is the hackneyed and sickly *trio* of a *soprano* faithless at heart to her husband, the *basso* and brute of the piece—with a *tenor* for lover, "most musical, most melancholy." The same combination is ten times as forcibly done in the 'Parisina,' and the 'Lucrezia Borgia': never wholesome, it is less agreeable when administered weak than strong. We hope for many more musical dramas from Sig. Costa, but on situations of greater strength and originality. He may not, like Rossini, be able to disguise a feeble story by the exquisite fancy of his melodies: but we think that he could work up to a forcible drama, so that not only the Haymarket, but also the Boulevard des Italiens, the Champs, the Corso, nay, and the Linden Strasse of the North German exclusives, might hear of it!

PHILHARMONIC CONCERTS.—The seventh Philharmonic Concert was, in some respects, singularly composed. The symphonies were of minor interest, but one of the three instrumental *solos* was a pianoforte concerto by Beethoven, more than once attempted, but never till now played publicly in England. Another novelty was an overture and suite of pieces by J. S. Bach. We hardly know how to speak in high enough praise of the first work. As a composition, the concerto in G major is beautiful; the opening movement is at once quiet and graceful, yet anything rather than insipid. It is needless to say, that in its forms it is wholly original; Beethoven, perhaps, being the one great musical genius, who never borrowed. Again, without a single bar being sacrificed to unmeaning show, the pianoforte has a prominence not always to be found in Beethoven's concerted works, and a player of the expressive school could not desire a fairer field for display, as Dr. Mendelssohn amply proved by his exquisite performance—even ere the cadence was reached: there the *improvisation* succeeded the interpreter, and the pianist, availing himself of one or two of the lovely themes of the movement, excited himself to marvels of execution and his audience to raptures of admiration. The stately, severe *adagio*, with its strict orchestral figures, and its admirably contrasted phrases for the *solo* instrument, never came out with such force and clearness on any former occasion; enhancing to a brilliant sportiveness the gamesome, capricious, delicate *finale*, which, also, our guest threw off with a fantasy unsurpassable. It is his moderation, no less than his animation, that makes Dr. Mendelssohn's performance of classical music so unique. We must add—too cramped in space for analysis or further rhapsody—that his extempore cadence to the *rondo* was equal to that to the *allegro*. The public would have fain treated the work as the Emperor Joseph did Mozart's 'Nozze,' and *encored* it entire; so great was the delight excited. The music of Sebastian Bach proved most interesting, in a quieter fashion. Those versed in Handel's overtures, which, by the way, are too universally overlooked, cannot but have observed the great similarity of style between the two writers, with the advantage, on the side of the Leipzig Cantor of a "curious felicity" of modulation, and a skill in the weaving of the minor parts, which the more hasty and Italian-trained Handel rarely took pains to command in his instrumental works. In the *aria*, a slow movement in B minor, and the *Bourrée*, a sort of rustic *gavotte*, which followed, the same character is discernible—the *gigue* is, perhaps a little simpler; grander, by the way, than any *giga* of Corelli, who is held by many as incomparable in that old-fashioned but graceful movement. Nothing could have a more welcome freshness than this ancient German music. The other overture was Beethoven's 'Egmont.' Signor Pinti, by his performance with full orchestra of a composition by Kummer, fully justified our high opinion expressed last week. Too many modern show-players are too weak and conventional in style, if not in tone and mechanical dexterity, to abide at once the contrast and the control of the full band. It is many years since a violoncellist produced so favourable an impression at a Philharmonic Concert. The third *solo* was a pair of movements from one of Molière's concertos played by Mr. Blagrove. The singers were Madame Thillon, Miss Hawes, who appears resolved to usurp the repertory of the tenor singers, and made a foray upon the ballad from Mehul's 'Joseph,' which is really too pastoral for a grand concert—and M. de Réval. This gentleman's polished voice and expressive style, both of which have impressed the public most favourably, would be more effective, were he to sing with half the dramatic effort he puts forth at present. Theatrical and orchestral singing are essentially different, and he will do wisely if, as it is rumoured, he desires to remain or return here, to study the point where they diverge.

CONCERTS.—Small abatement, as yet, of the concert fever! which, in these broiling Midsummer days, we fear may be more exhausting to artists and audiences, than profitable to the givers. Yesterday week, M. Brizzi treated his friends to all the popular Italian singers and Italian songs; but the promised pieces from Verdi's opera of 'I Lombardi,' which work seems to have a certain vogue at present, were, of necessity, omitted, owing to

the hoarseness of Signor Mario. Madame Morosini—a singer, if not new, rarely heard—has a gentle *contralto* voice, which must be very agreeable in a private room, though not strong enough for a public saloon. Mr. and Mrs. W. Seguin, and Mr. Handel Gear, attracted a crowded audience to their concert on Monday: the vocal part of their programme was starred by Madame Castellan and Herr Staudigl. So enthusiastically did we admire the last-named artist during his first seasons in England, that we cannot but regret to see him overstepping the bounds of moderation; not only by forcing a voice, the want of which was not power but vocal finish; but by selecting, for performance, music unworthy of his high reputation. The principal instrumentalists were Signor Cavallini, who *clarinets* it more wonderfully than ever—M. Thalberg, and M. Offenbach. The last artist follows a pernicious fashion in playing, on the violoncello what was not meant for the violoncello: "transcribed" is a new musical term we find it hard to recognize, even when a Liszt represents, on the piano, Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony, or an Ernst on the violin, Schubert's wondrous 'Erlkönig.' Moreover, the song without words, by Mendelssohn, does not move at the funeral pace chosen by M. Offenbach. We dwell on this peculiar example, because the offender is both too highly gifted and too young to be permitted to wander from true artistic taste, without protest. Mr. W. S. Bennett's Concert, given on Tuesday morning, was one of the most interesting meetings of the season. His Concerto in F minor, and overture to 'The Naiades,' are among his best works. We should have been obliged, if he had allowed us, in addition, to hear some of his songs. Then he had the great advantage of Dr. Mendelssohn for conductor: and the attraction of two works by that master not publicly performed here: the first, a set of duet variations on a theme, in which we admire the richness, variety, and climax of the changes, more perhaps than the melody. The other, a motet for female voices, one of a set composed for a Roman convent, is a delightful composition; in which the crudity of such a mass of unaccompanied *soprano* tone is avoided by the nicest art. Mr. Bennett's singers were Madame Castellan, Miss Dolby, Miss Marshall, two other ladies, and a chorus from the Academy—Signor Brizzi and Herr Staudigl. Here, however, we were made to feel, as we do about once a week during the season, our humiliating poverty in orchestral support. The programme of the concert was entirely dislocated, owing to the band being detained by an opera rehearsal. Do not all such instances cry aloud for some independent orchestra at the service of concert givers, which shall be of substance, not show—and, by perpetual practice under an intelligent and enterprising conductor, be equal and ready for any task assigned to it? Besides the above, entertainments have been given by Signor Szepanowski, a redoubtable guitar player, Miss Henrietta Roedel who appeals to the public in the double capacity of pianist and songstress, and Miss Julia Heinke. That the last lady has been trained in the ways of classical music, was evidenced in her steady, yet sensitive performance of Moscheles' Septet, and of her part in the same composer's 'Hommage à Beethoven.' Here she had to measure herself against its author, and Dr. Mendelssohn Bartholdy. The other novelties of the concert, were Miss Duval, who sang a *contralto* song from Handel's 'Athaliah,' with a feeling and finish which ought at once to promote her to the Exeter Hall orchestra;—Herr Sachse, a German trumpeter, who works marvels on his unmanageable instrument; his tone being thinner and more valuable than we are accustomed to hear;—and M. Gulomy, yet another violinist, from Russia: in whom, too, power and feeling were accompanied with some peculiarities of tone, which separate him from the commonality of stringed instrument players.

PRINCESS'S THEATRE.—We can but this week announce the *début* of Miss Austin, as having taken place. The opera selected was 'L'Elisir d'Amore,' the worst-translated (this is saying much) of all the Italian operas, and therefore the least eligible for an English singer to appear in. Next week we will endeavour to report upon the *débutante* as a vocalist and an actress.

MISCELLANEA

Paris Academy of Sciences.—June 17.—M. Arago gave an account of the observations made at the Observatory during the eclipse of the moon on the 31st ult. On this occasion the light of the moon, although under what is called a total eclipse, did not entirely disappear; but at the height of the eclipse gave forth a dull red light. This light used to be attributed to phosphorescent emanations from the moon, but the modern astronomers ascribe it to the solar rays refracted by the terrestrial atmosphere. The light, however, at the eclipse of the 31st ult. presented too frequent and rapid variations of intensity to have any connexion with the changes that were possible at the same time in the earth's atmosphere. The well-known but curious phenomenon of the appearance of two moons at one period of the eclipse added to its grandeur.—M. Piobert has ascertained that gunpowder will not explode unless the grains be compact, and that if the interstices between them be filled up with finely-powdered charcoal, the gunpowder, if set fire to, will not explode, and will fuse slowly. When the powder is removed from the magazine for use, all that is necessary to restore the explosive property is to sift it. M. Piobert made a communication on this subject to the government, but it does not appear that his plan was put to the test. In Russia, however, it has been tried, and there has been received from M. Fadoieff an account of the numerous essays made by the members of a commission, appointed to report on the discovery. M. Fadoieff states that the trials were successful.—M. Pecqueur, Bontemps, and Zambaux, laid before the Academy a paper on the application of compressed atmospheric air as a moving power in locomotive engines. They estimate the saving to be effected by the use of this substitute for steam at 32 per cent., or nearly one-third.—An account of travels in Abyssinia was received from M. Galinier and Ferret.—M. Thiliorier made another communication on the discovery of a nervous fluid. He has offered, it seems, to perform his experiments in the study of M. Arago, and the offer has been accepted. In the next sitting, therefore, we may expect to hear something.—A paper was received from M. Skolasi, announcing that he has performed a successful operation for cataract upon a man 104 years of age. He adds, that the old man has recovered his sight, and has, since the operation, paid a visit to the Exhibition of National Industry.

Earl of Durham.—A monument to the late Earl is proposed for erection on Pensher-hill, near the base of which runs the great Northern line of railway. "The design," says the *Durham Advertiser*, "is an approximation to the Temple of Theseus, and is to consist of a rectangular base of solid masonry 97 feet long, and 54 in width, rising 10 feet above the platform of the hill, and surmounted by 18 lofty, open, equidistant columns, supporting at each end a magnificent pediment, and on each side a broad, deep entablature, which will serve as a promenade. The edifice will be at least 70 feet in height, and will be visible from a great portion of the surrounding country. The trench for the foundation has been dug down to the limestone rock, and in a short time the foundation stone may be expected to be laid."

Nelson.—The ball which inflicted Nelson's death-wound—preserved by the late Sir William Beatty, who was principal medical attendant on board the Victory at the time of the fatal event—has been presented by his eldest surviving brother, Captain Beatty, as an interesting national relic, to the Queen, and will, it is said, be deposited in Windsor Castle. Greenwich Hospital would seem to be its more appropriate place of deposit. The ball, with the particles of the coat and epaulette that were forced into the body, has been set within a crystal case, which is appropriately mounted with a double cable of gold around its circumference, and opens like a watch.

Lord Byron.—Among the objects intrusted to the care of the banker Caccia, who was declared a bankrupt last month (May), was a box containing the MSS. of Lord Byron. The box, belonging to the Countess Guiccioli, to whom the great poet bequeathed his most precious *souvenirs*, was claimed on the 19th from the Syndic of the bankruptcy by M. Micard, the attorney for the countess. Besides the MSS. of all the printed works of Lord Byron there are a few

unpublished poems and critical notes written by himself in his own publications.—*Revue de Paris.*

The Railroad Bridge of Venice.—A Correspondent in *The Builder* gives the following account of the state of this undertaking:—"This bridge is commenced in many places, and up to the present time (I was there last month—May), there are no less than 147 arches finished, or nearly so, and yet there is much more to be built before this magnificent work will be completed. The masonry of the arches is all stone, and the piers placed at certain distances are of brick faced with stone; the top of the arch to the surface of the water is, I should say, about 12 feet, perhaps not so much, as I had not the means of measuring it. No one besides those persons who have seen it can imagine the difficulties and labour required for this gigantic work; every morsel of earth, stone, brick, lime, iron, wood for framework and for the coffer-dams, together with the fresh water for making the cement, is brought in boats from the mainland, a considerable distance, and yet this has all been surmounted by the indefatigable zeal, talent, and industry of a German engineer, Milano by name, by whom the extraordinary undertaking is superintended, planned, and executed. The railroad itself will finally go on to Milan; at present it only runs from Mestre to Padua, about one hour's steam. The engines and one-half of the iron rails are of English manufacture. C. T. A."

Peal of Bells for York Minster.—The papers mention that a very fine and powerful peal of bells is about to be erected in one of the towers of York Minster. They are the gift of the late Dr. Beckworth, a physician of York, who bequeathed 2,000*l.* for the express purpose of furnishing the great northern Cathedral with a suitable peal of bells. They are 12 in number, the largest weighing 53 cwt., and being in note C; the smallest 8 cwt., and the whole being upwards of 10 tons in weight. In addition to the above, a complete "monster" clock bell is about being cast for the Minster, which, it is stated, will be the largest in the world, and of the enormous weight of 10 tons, that of the great bell at Oxford being 7 tons; Great Tom of Lincoln 5½ tons; and the great bell of St. Paul's 5 tons. It is to be paid for by subscription, 1,700*l.* having been already collected.

The Upas Tree.—A living plant of this celebrated tree was lately presented to the Horticultural Society by the East India Company, and is now growing in the Chiswick-garden. It is in perfect health, and, notwithstanding the fables of Dutch travellers, may be approached with safety. It is, however, so virulent a poison that no prudent person would handle it without proper precaution.—*Gardeners' Chronicle.*

Shakespeare's Jug.—This relic of the immortal bard has found its way to Gloucester, having been purchased at Mrs. Turberville's sale by Mrs. Fletcher, the wife of Mr. Fletcher, gunsmith, who purchased it for nineteen guineas and the duty. The jug is of cream-coloured earthenware, about nine inches in height. It is divided longitudinally into eight compartments, and horizontally subdivided, and within these the principal deities of the Grecian Mythology are represented in rather bold relief. It was demised with other effects of Shakespeare, to his sister Joan, who married William Hart, of Stratford-upon-Avon. The Harts subsequently settled in Tewkesbury, and the jug was preserved by them through several generations with religious care; but a few years ago it passed out of their hands. Mrs. Fletcher is a direct descendant of the Harts, and by her spirited competition she has again brought the interesting relic into the possession of her family, which had for so many years preserved it.—*Times.*

The Madonna, of Loretto.—The treasure of the sanctuary of Our-Lady-of-Loretto has just vanished. The event has thrown the Court of Rome into consternation. At the time the French conquered Italy, the Pontifical Government removed to Rome the Madonna's rich coffer, in order to shelter it from the profane covetousness of the conquerors. Since the restoration it has been conveyed back to Loretto, and new offerings had increased its richness. Count Rocchi, Receiver-General of the province of Ancona, to whose custody the coffer of holy Loretto was intrusted, had embarked in an Austrian steamer proceeding to Trieste, and carried off the contents of all the coffers, the keys of which he had in his possession.—*Revue de Paris.*

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